









सत्यमेव जयते

REPORT ON SURVEY OF LABOUR  
CONDITIONS IN RUBBER  
PLANTATIONS IN INDIA

**LABOUR BUREAU**  
**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**  
**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**



## PREFACE

Industrial labour and its problems have been the subject of interest, though varying in degree and extent, ever since India entered the industrial field over a century ago. To-day this interest has shifted from prevention of exploitation of labour to providing a fair deal and opportunities for a fuller life to labour. The growing realisation of this approach to problems of labour in India, in the context of present-day planned economic development of the country, is provided a sound base by the Surveys that reveal true conditions of labour.

The last detailed Survey on a country-wide basis of the working and living conditions of industrial labour was conducted by the Labour Investigation Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1944. The years that followed witnessed far-reaching changes in the set-up of the country, its basic policies and national objectives. As a result, the long-term strategy for economic and industrial advance recognises the well-being of the working class as an essential factor in the overall stability and progress of the country. The adoption of this policy, in the changed circumstances of the country, has brought about a new awakening in the ranks of labour and afforded them much relief in various directions through legislation and other measures.

In order to assess the impact of these measures on the industrial labour and to appraise their present conditions, a scheme for a comprehensive Survey of Labour Conditions was incorporated in the Second Five Year Plan and its execution was entrusted to the Labour Bureau. The Survey was conducted according to a phased programme in 46 industries. This report presents data regarding Rubber Plantations covered under the scheme during 1961-62.

The present Survey differs considerably from similar investigations in the past in matters of design, scope and presentation of data. It has also certain distinguishing features. For example, it furnishes data separately for large and small establishments in various industries, makes a limited study of labour cost in relation to the benefits and amenities that the workers now enjoy, seeks to fill the gap in the statistics of labour turnover and absenteeism in various industries and provides first-hand information on certain important aspects of labour-management relations. Attempt has also been made to collect and interpret data on certain conventional items in a more meaningful way. In the presentation of the data the effort has been to reduce the information into quantitative terms so as to serve as a bench mark for purpose of evaluation of changes at a future date. Recourse to general description has been resorted to only where the other type of treatment was not possible.

In a Survey of this magnitude it was but natural that many problems had to be faced both in planning as well as execution. Most of these flowed from non-availability of up to-date frames and absence or improper maintenance of records in many establishments. In many cases the field staff had almost to build up the required statistics from various sources. This naturally imposed a heavy demand on the managements and the Bureau is deeply indebted

to them for their whole-hearted co-operation. The co-operation and valuable assistance received from associations of employers and workers, particularly the United Planters' Association of Southern India, Labour Commissioners as well as Chief Inspectors of Plantations and other officials of State Labour Departments is also gratefully acknowledged.

The debt of gratitude that I owe to the Central Statistical Organisation and the Chief Adviser of Factories for evincing keen interest in the Survey and rendering technical advice on various matters is indeed great. I am also thankful to the Employment Division of the Planning Commission for examining the schedules and instructions and offering useful suggestions. I am equally grateful to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. A., Social Surveys Division, Ministry of Labour and Social Service, U. K., Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour, Canada and Labour Statistics and Research Division, Ministry of Labour, Japan, whose advice was sought on several technical matters.

The primary responsibility for conducting this Survey and bringing out the reports on individual industries was ably borne by Shri B. N. Srivastava, Deputy Director, whose experience and application came into full play in this assignment. On various statistical problems arising out of the Survey, the requisite technical advice was provided by other officers at Headquarters. Shri K. Lakshminarayanan, Research Officer (who was also the field supervisor) rendered valuable assistance in the drafting of this report. The field investigations were carried out by Sarvashri B. Raghavan, S. K. Rao, V. S. Rao, P. Venkataraman and K. C. Luke. Shri K. M. Varghese, Computer, assisted in the computation of the data. To these all my thanks are due.

The views expressed in this report are not those of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

K. C. SEAL  
*Director*

LABOUR BUREAU, SIMLA

*Dated the 24th November, 1964*

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preface .. .. .	(i)
CHAPTER I—INTRODUCTION	
Introduction ..	
CHAPTER II—EMPLOYMENT	
Composition of the Working Force .. .. .	5
Distribution by Broad Occupational Groups .. .. .	5
Employment of Women .. .. .	8
Adolescents .. .. .	9
Child Labour .. .. .	9
Contract Labour .. .. .	10
Employment Status .. .. .	10
Length of Service .. .. .	11
Absenteeism .. .. .	12
Labour Turnover .. .. .	13
Recruitment .. .. .	15
CHAPTER III—WAGES AND EARNINGS	
Minimum Wages in Rubber Plantations .. .. .	17
Wage Revision .. .. .	19
Pay Periods .. .. .	19
Average Daily Earnings: All Workers, Production Workers, Lowest Paid Workers, Clerical and Related Workers and Watch and Ward and Other Services ..	20
Components of Earnings .. .. .	22
Bonus .. .. .	25
CHAPTER IV—WORKING CONDITIONS	
Hours of work .. .. .	26
Task system .. .. .	27
Conservancy .. .. .	27
Leave and Holidays: Earned Leave, Sick Leave, Casual Leave, National and Festival Holidays and Weekly Off .. .. .	28
CHAPTER V—WELFARE AND AMENITIES	
Drinking Water .. .. .	31
Canteens .. .. .	31
Creches .. .. .	32
Medical Facilities .. .. .	32
Recreational Facilities .. .. .	34
Educational Facilities .. .. .	34
Protective Clothing .. .. .	36
Housing .. .. .	36
CHAPTER VI—SOCIAL SECURITY	
Provident Fund .. .. .	41
Gratuity .. .. .	41
Maternity Benefits .. .. .	42
Industrial Accidents .. .. .	43



							PAGE
<b>CHAPTER VII—INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS</b>							
<b>Industrial Disputes</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>44</b>
<b>Trade Unions</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>44</b>
<b>Agreements</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>46</b>
<b>Standing Orders</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>46</b>
<b>Welfare Officers</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>46</b>
<b>Works Committees</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>46</b>
<b>Grievance Procedure</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>47</b>
<b>Plantations Labour Committee/Advisory Boards</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>48</b>
<b>CHAPTER VIII—LABOUR COST</b>							
<b>Components of Labour Cost: Wages, Bonuses, Other Cash Payments, Social Security,</b>							
<b>Subsidies and Other Payments Related to Labour Cost</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>56</b>
<b>CHAPTER IX—SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS</b>							
<b>Appendix I—A Brief Note on the Sampe Design and the Method of Estimation</b>							
<b>Adopted</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>60</b>

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. *Origin and Growth*

The origin of the Rubber Plantation Industry in India can be traced to the end of the nineteenth century although rubber cultivation on a commercial basis is said to have commenced only at the beginning of the present century. The invention of the pneumatic tyre seems to have contributed to the rapid growth of the industry. The area under rubber underwent significant rise especially between the period 1910 and 1925 due mainly to increased demand during this period. Production of raw rubber which was only 80† tons in 1910 increased to 6,300 tons in 1925, the corresponding area under cultivation of rubber being 29,500 and 76,295 acres respectively. After facing a period of depression between 1929 and 1934, the industry began to stabilise. The Second War once again gave a powerful impetus to the industry. Since Independence there has been a steady increase in acreage under rubber and an almost steady upward trend in production. The acreage increased from 161, 548 in 1948 to 1,71,191 in 1951 and 3,48,121 in 1961. The corresponding figures for rubber production were 15,422 tons, 17,148 tons and 26,566 tons\*.

### 1.2. *Location of the Industry*

Rubber Plantations are concentrated entirely in southern parts of India and the State of Kerala has almost the monopoly as is evident from the statistics given below. It accounted for 94 per cent. of total acreage and 99 per cent. of plantations in the country.

#### STATEMENT 1.1

##### AREA UNDER RUBBER ACCORDING TO SIZE OF HOLDINGS—1961

State	Plantations having upto 50 acres		Plantations having more than 50 acres		Total	
	Number of planta- tions	Total acreage	Number of planta- tions	Total acreage	Number of planta- tions	Total acreage
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Kerala .. ..	62,302	2,04,909	530	1,23,345	62,832 (99.0)	3,28,254 (94.3)
Madras .. ..	548	4,536	39	10,878	587 (1.0)	15,414 (4.4)
Mysore .. ..	17	314	10	3,717	27 (†)	4,031 (1.2)
Andamans .. ..	..	..	1	422	1 (†)	422 (0.1)
Total .. ..	62,867	2,09,759	580	1,38,362	63,447 (100.0)	3,48,121 (100.0)

Source—Indian Rubber Statistics, Vol. 5, 1962, The Rubber Board, p. 12.

NOTE—Figures in brackets indicate percentage to total of the column.

† Indicates that the percentage is less than 0.005.

† Recent developments in certain aspects of Indian Economy, I.L.O. p. 4.

\* The Rubber Board, Indian Rubber Statistics Vol. 5, 1962, p. 13.

A noteworthy feature of Rubber Plantations in the country is that most of them are of small size, *i.e.*, cultivating holdings up to 50 acres. The figures given above show that in 1961 almost 99 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations were of small size but they accounted for only 60 per cent. of the total acreage.

It may be pointed out at this stage that the number of units discussed above relate to the entire Rubber Plantations in the country but all these estates do not come under the purview of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951. The Plantations Labour Act applies to the plantations which admeasure 10·117 hectares (25 acres) or more and in which thirty or more persons are employed or were employed on any day of the preceding months. According to the lists of plantations maintained by the State Governments, the number of Rubber Plantations or plantations which had rubber as the major crop\* and which were covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, was 147 in 1960 indicating thereby the existence of large number of estates which are outside the purview of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

### 1·3. *Genesis of the Survey*

The first comprehensive survey of conditions of labour in various industries including plantations in India on a country-wide basis was conducted by the Royal Commission on Labour in 1929-31. Its report and findings formed the basis of the various ameliorative measures. After a lapse of over a decade, *i.e.*, in 1944 the Government of India appointed another Committee, *viz.*, the Labour Investigation Committee, to enquire into the conditions of labour in all important industries. The Committee conducted detailed investigations in 38 industries including plantations during 1944-45 and, besides a main report on labour conditions in general, published individual reports in respect of various industries. These reports provided valuable material for the formulation of labour policy. The years that followed witnessed many changes of far reaching significance. For instance, many legislative measures were adopted to improve working and living conditions and several schemes were introduced for promoting welfare and social security of workers. The setting up of the adjudication machinery also led to improvement in conditions of work and wages in various industries. Above all, the attainment of Independence by the country gave a new status to the working class. In view of these developments, the Ministry of Labour and Employment as well as the Planning Commission considered it necessary that a fresh comprehensive survey of labour conditions in various industries should be conducted so that it may be possible to assess the effects of various measures adopted so far and to obtain a precise picture of the existing conditions and problems of labour for purposes of deciding future course of action. Accordingly, a scheme for the conduct of a Survey of Labour Conditions was included in the Second Five Year Plan and the Labour Bureau was entrusted with the execution of the Scheme.

### 1·4. *Scope and Design*

A note appended† to the report gives details relating to the sample design and method of estimation adopted. In view of absence of a complete list of all Rubber estates, the Survey was confined to establishments coming within the

---

\*Some of the estates have mixed crops *e.g.*, Rubber and Tea. In such cases the estates are classified on the basis of the predominance of acreage under any crop.

† Appendix I.

purview of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and listed with the State Governments. Since the Rubber Plantations are concentrated entirely in Southern India it was decided to have a single stratum *i.e.*, All-India. Earlier investigations had indicated existence of wide variations in conditions of work, standards of welfare amenities, etc., in establishments of different size groups in various industries. It was, therefore, considered desirable to collect data separately for establishments of different sizes. In the light of the resources available and from the point of practicability it was decided that, for purposes of the Survey, Rubber Plantations may be divided into two size groups *i.e.*, large and small. For this purpose the stratification point was arrived at on the basis of the average employment of the units in the industry as a whole, during 1960, the latest year for which information was available. The out-off point so calculated and used was 194 *i.e.*, units employing up to 194 workers were treated as small size estates and rest as large estates. The sampling fraction adopted was 25 per cent. for the large estates and 12.5 per cent. in the case of small estates. The following Statement shows the number of Rubber Plantations together with the number of workers employed therein (a) in the frame, (b) in samples selected and actually covered :—

### STATEMENT 1.2

#### NUMBER OF RUBBER PLANTATIONS AND PERSONS EMPLOYED THEREIN IN THE FRAME AND AS COVERED BY THE SURVEY

Size	In the frame 1960		In the samples selected and covered	
	Number of estates	Number of workers employed	Number of estates	Number of workers employed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Large Estates .. ..	40	21,299	10 (25.0)	5,889 (27.6)
Small Estates .. ..	107	7,196	13 (12.1)	896 (12.4)
All Estates .. ..	147	28,495	23 (15.6)	6,785 (23.8)

NOTE—Figures in brackets are percentages of respective totals in Col. (2) and (3).

From the figures given above it would be seen that the Survey ultimately covered about 16 per cent. of Rubber Plantations and nearly 24 per cent. of the workers employed therein. Since only those plantations came in the sample as featured in the frame and as it was not possible to take into account of new estates, if any, which came into being during the period of the Survey or estates which ceased to function and hence went out of the purview of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, the information given in the report should be treated to relate to conditions in plantations, covered under the Plantations Labour Act, which were in existence during the period to which the frame related *i.e.*, 1960 and which continued to exist at the time of the Survey.

The data were collected in a specially designed schedule\* by personal visits of the field staff of the Bureau. With a view to testing the schedule and instructions prepared for the Survey as also to impart training to the field staff, a pilot enquiry was conducted. On the basis of the experience of this enquiry, the schedule and instructions were suitably revised. Usually Rubber Plantations have off season in February-March and the period from September to January is considered to be a very busy period for tapping work. The specified date selected for purposes of collecting data on employment, wages, earnings, etc., was 31st October, 1961 as this fell during the season and it was felt that collection of data for this period would enable better appreciation of various aspects of labour in the industry. The main field enquiry in Rubber Plantations was launched in November, 1961 and ended in July, 1962. Since the enquiry in essence was during 1961-62, the data, except where specifically mentioned, should be treated to relate to this period.

Rubber Plantations were covered by the Labour Investigation Committee in the course of their enquiry of plantation industries. With a view to indicating the developments and changes which have taken place since then some remarks have been given in this report regarding the position at the time of the Committee's enquiry and the present Survey. Since there are differences in the scope of the previous enquiry and this Survey, the comparisons, wherever made, can be treated to be only broadly valid.

---

\*The schedule was the same as used for other industries, a copy of which has been published as an Appendix to the Report on Survey of Labour Conditions in Silk Factories in India. Only some minor changes were made to collect some more details relevant to Plantations Industry.

## CHAPTER II

### EMPLOYMENT

Judged from the point of view of number of persons employed, Rubber Plantations rank third among the plantation industries in India; the first and second places are occupied by Tea and Coffee. No accurate statistics are available regarding the labour employed in the industry as a whole, and therefore, it is not possible to comment upon the employment trend in the industry. Some statistics are available in respect of those plantations which are covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951. These relate to those which admeasure 10·117 hectares or more and employ 30 or more persons. The statistics furnished by the State Governments in respect of these plantations show that in 1960 the average daily employment in Rubber Plantations covered under the Act was 28,495.

#### 2·1. *Composition of the Working Force*

With a view to maintaining comparability as also uniformity, statistics pertaining to employment in Rubber Plantations were collected for a fixed date i.e., 31st October, 1961. The results of the Survey indicate that on this date the employment strength of Rubber Plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act was 19,339. This estimate relates to rubber estates or estates which had rubber as the major crop and which were covered under the Plantations Labour Act, and relates to employees engaged on the work of rubber production only. It differs from the average daily employment of 28,495 in 1960 largely because the latter relates, in some cases to mixed estates also where there were certain employees engaged on work relating to production of tea, etc.

#### 2·2. *Distribution by Broad Occupational Groups*

For purposes of the survey the classification\* of occupations was as follows:—

- (1) Professional, Technical and Related Personnel.
- (2) Administrative, Executive and Managerial Personnel.
- (3) Clerical and Related Personnel (including Supervisory).
- (4) Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory).
- (5) Watch and Ward and Other Services.

Statement 2·1 gives the estimated total number of employees by broad occupational groups in the Rubber Plantations in the country.

It will be seen from Statement 2·1 that 'Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory)' constituted the bulk of the working force accounting for nearly 95 per cent. of the total estimated number of workers in the Rubber Plantation Industry. Persons falling in other groups constituted a very small percentage of the total.

---

\*The above classification was based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations as adopted by the International Labour Office.

## STATEMENT 2-1

ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS BY BROAD OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS—  
OCTOBER, 1961

Size	Estimated Number of Workers*					
	Profes- sional, Technical and Related Personnel	Adminis- trative, Executive and Managerial Personnel	Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervi- sory)	Production and Related Workers (including (Supervi- sory)	Watch and Ward and Other Services	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Large Estates .. ..	52 (0.4)	59 (0.5)	151 (1.2)	11,680 (94.7)	393 (3.2)	12,335 (100.0)
Small Estates .. ..	7 (0.1)	74 (1.1)	67 (0.9)	6,687 (95.5)	169 (2.4)	7,004 (100.0)
All Estates .. ..	59 (0.3)	133 (0.7)	218 (1.1)	18,367 (95.0)	562 (2.9)	19,339 (100.0)

NOTE—Figures in brackets are per centages to total in column (7).

\*Relate to workers covered as well as not covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

It may be relevant to point out in this connection that classification of workers as 'production workers', 'watch and ward' etc., is not rigidly followed in plantations. The workers in plantations are generally classified into two categories, i.e., (1) Field Labour, and (2) Staff. All persons in the first category are daily-rated while the persons included in the second category are usually monthly-rated workers. Staff members hold superior position *vis-a-vis* field labour and persons included in this group are clerks and related workers, medical staff (doctors, nurses, etc.), Field Conductors (production supervisors), Teachers, Lorry Drivers, Electricians and such other persons who are monthly-rated and are termed as 'staff' by the managements. All daily-rated workers are called field labourers. When once a worker is recruited as a field labourer in the plantations, he is expected to attend to any type of work. For example, a worker who might be attending to work such as weeding, lopping, etc., may be required to work as a watchman and *vice-versa*. Since minimum wages are the same for all the time-rated workers in plantations, no problem is involved in shifting of workers from one job to another and there is constant interchange of jobs.

The Plantations Labour Act, 1951 defines 'Worker' as follows:

"Worker" means a person employed in any plantation for hire or reward, whether directly or through any agency to do any work, skilled, unskilled, manual or clerical but does not include:

- (a) a medical officer employed in any plantation;
- (b) any person employed in the plantation (including any member of the medical staff) whose monthly wages exceed Rupees three hundred;

- (c) any person employed in the plantation primarily in a managerial capacity, notwithstanding that his monthly wages do not exceed rupees three hundred; or
- (d) any person temporarily employed in the plantation in any work relating to the construction, development or maintenance of buildings, roads, bridges, drains or canals."

Data collected during the Survey show that persons who did not come within the definition of the 'Worker' as defined above accounted for only one per cent. of the total working force. Details for the broad groups are given in the following Statement.

### STATEMENT 2·2

#### ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS COVERED AND NOT-COVERED UNDER THE PLANTATIONS LABOUR ACT—OCTOBER 1961

Size	Professional, Technical and Related Personnel		Administrative, Executive and Managerial Personnel		Clerical and Related Workers	
	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Large Estates ..	42 (80·8)	10 (19·2)	..	59 (100·0)	128 (84·8)	23 (15·2)
Small Estates ..	7 (100·0)	..	..	74 (100·0)	67 (100·0)	..
All Estates ..	49 (83·5)	10 (16·5)	..	133 (100·0)	195 (89·4)	23 (10·6)

Size	Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory)		Watch and Ward and other Services		Total	
	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered
(1)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Large Estates ..	11,677 (100·0)	3 (0·0)	377 (96·0)	16 (4·0)	12,224 (99·1)	111 (0·9)
Small Estates ..	6,687 (100·0)	..	169 (100·0)	..	6,930 (98·9)	74 (1·1)
All Estates ..	18,364 (100·0)	3 (0·0)	546 (97·2)	16 (2·8)	19,154 (99·0)	185 (1·0)

NOTE—Figures in brackets are percentages to totals of the respective groups.



It will be seen from the above Statement that of the persons 'not covered' under the Plantations Labour Act, the majority were 'Administrative, Executive and Managerial Personnel'. In fact, every where, all employees of this group were found to have been excluded from the coverage of the Act. The rest of the persons were distributed in various other groups.

### 2.3. *Employment of Women*

A striking feature of labour force in plantations in South India in 1944 towards which the Labour Investigation Committee had drawn specific attention was employment of women and children in large numbers. The Committee estimated that the proportion of women to total number of workers in Rubber Plantations was 24 per cent. Data collected during the present Survey reveal that employment of women has increased since then. It is estimated that in the industry as a whole 89 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations were employing women, the corresponding percentage for large and small size estates being 100 and 85 respectively. Women workers constituted 29.5 per cent. of the estimated total working force in the industry. Details for the estates in the large and small size groups are given in the following Statement:—

#### STATEMENT 2.3

#### PROPORTION OF MEN, WOMEN, ADOLESCENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE WORKING FORCE—OCTOBER 1961

Size	Estimated number of workers employed*				
	Men	Women	Adolescents	Children	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Large Estates .. ..	8,693 (71.1)	3,528 (28.9)	3 (0.0)	..	12,224 (100.0)
Small Estates .. ..	4,598 (66.3)	2,133 (30.8)	125 (1.8)	74 (1.1)	6,930 (100.0)
All Estates .. ..	13,291 (69.4)	5,661 (29.5)	128 (0.7)	74 (0.4)	19,154 (100.0)

NOTE—Figures in brackets are percentages.

\*Relates to workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act.

Except for the encouragement given by planters to workers to join their estates on a family basis there appears to be no special reason for the significant proportion of women in the plantations in general. Apparently employment of women has come to stay in the plantations.

Due to the absence of rigid classification of workers according to different occupations, it was not possible to collect data on the extent of employment of women in the different occupations. In fact, as already explained earlier, any worker, when once he is appointed as a 'labourer', is expected to attend to any type of work assigned by the management. A good number of instances, where women who were attending to work such as weeding, manuring, etc., were switched on to work as creche attendants, were noticed in the Rubber Plantations. However, it was noticed that for certain jobs such as sweeping, creche

attendants, mid-wives, women alone were appointed. But these accounted for a small proportion of women. Generally speaking, women were predominantly engaged in occupations such as weeding and manuring. In a few cases they were found to be engaged on tapping work also although tapping work is predominantly attended to by men only. The reason for this seems to be that since women are available for work they are utilised after ensuring that they have acquired the necessary skill for the job.

#### 2.4. *Adolescents*

Adolescents, i.e., persons between the ages of 15 and 18, are treated as a separate category under the Plantations Labour Act. Even though adolescents were found to be employed in about 20 per cent. of the units, their proportion to the total workers was, however, not significant.\* Wherever employed, they were found to be engaged on light jobs such as weeding or manuring.

#### 2.5. *Child Labour*

At the time the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their Survey children in Rubber Plantations accounted for 4 per cent. of the total workers employed in the industry. The results of the present Survey reveal that there has been considerable improvement in this matter and in October 1961 the proportion of children to the total working force was negligible\*. It is estimated that only 11 per cent. of estates employed children and that too for certain light jobs like weeding, manuring, etc.

Even though the Plantations Labour Act stipulates that children should carry token giving reference to certificate of fitness, in none of the sampled estates where children were employed this provision of the law had been complied with.

#### 2.6. *Time and piece rated workers*

The following Statement shows the distribution of workers according to time or piece-rate systems of payment:—

##### STATEMENT 2.4

##### PROPORTION OF TIME AND PIECE-RATED PRODUCTION WORKERS—OCTOBER 1961

Size				Estimated number of production workers†	Percentage of production workers paid at	
					Time rates	Piece rates
(1)				(2)	(3)	(4)
Large Estates	..	..	..	11,677	44.7	55.3
Small Estates	..	..	..	6,687	61.2	38.8
All Estates	..	..	..	18,364	50.7	49.3

†Relates to workers covered under the Act Only.

Though the overall proportion of time and piece-rated workers was nearly equal in the industry as a whole, the distribution of workers of the two types was different in two size groups. Piece-rated workers constituted about 55 per cent. in large estates as against 39 per cent. in small ones. The main reason for

\*Refer to Statement 2.3.

this is that 'tapping', the most important operation in Rubber Plantation, is generally paid on piece-rate basis. In fact, this is the only operation which is piece-rated and all other jobs like weeding, manuring, lopping, etc., are all paid on time rates. It was noticed that some of the small estates were paying 'tappers' also on time rates. On the other hand in large estates tappers were entirely piece-rated.

## 2.7. *Contract Labour*

The Plantations Labour Act, 1951 excludes from its purview 'any person temporarily employed in the plantation in any work relating to the construction, development or maintenance of buildings, roads, bridges, drains or canals'. Since the scope of the Survey was restricted to persons covered under the Plantations Labour Act and since contract labour was generally engaged for the above items of work only, no data were collected in respect of workers engaged in such operations. However, it was noticed in many estates that such items of work as wood cutting, construction of roads, buildings, were given to contractors, who engaged their own labour for executing their work. The estate managements had nothing to do with the labour employed as they were directly controlled by the contractors. The work was also for a specified duration.

## 2.8. *Employment Status*

At the time the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry workers were generally classified into three categories; (a) garden labour (permanent), (b) outside labour (permanent) and (c) outside labour (temporary)' The statistics of average daily employment given by the Committee indicate that in 1942 garden labour (permanent) accounted for 53 per cent., outside labour (permanent) 20 per cent., while the outside labour (temporary) constituted 27 per cent. of the working force. Since then there has been a change in the classification largely as a result of application of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 to the industry. The model Standing Orders framed by the United Planters' Association of Southern India and the Association of Planters of Kerala (affiliated to the UPASI) provide for classification of all employees into two groups: (a) staff and (b) workmen. Staff members comprise supervisory personnel and staff of medical and welfare establishments, clerks and motor vehicle drivers employed on monthly rates of pay, and they are classified as permanent, probationer and temporary. Workmen, i.e., the rest, are classified only into two groups viz., permanent and casual. Data collected during the course of the Survey regarding employment status of production workers are given below:—

### STATEMENT 2.5

#### *Distribution of Production Workers by Employment Status—October, 1961*

Size		Estimated number of production workers*	Percentage distribution of workers			
			Permanent	Temporary	Casual	Others
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Large Estates	..	11,677	77.0	6.1	16.9	..
Small Estates	..	6,687	60.1	0.7	39.2	..
All Estates	..	18,364	70.9	4.1	25.0	..

\*Relates to workers covered under the Act only.

It is estimated that in October 1961 about 71 per cent. of the workers in the entire industry were permanent and the rest were non-permanent. The significant proportion of casual labour (25%) to the total is due to the fact that work in plantations is seasonal to some extent and during certain busy seasons, more workers are needed to meet the requirements of the work. The practice of engaging casual labour is almost universal in Rubber Plantations. Large estates keep a regular labour force and usually engage casual labour to cope up with the rush of work only during season. But some of the small estates keep only a few workers on a regular basis and engage casual labour from time to time. This is the main reason for higher proportion of casual labour in this group as compared to large estates.

Though the model Standing Orders referred to above, do not provide for the group "Temporary", yet a small percentage of workers were being termed by managements as temporary. This was due to the fact that some of the managements which had adopted the model Standing Orders, did not make a clear distinction between 'temporary' and 'casual' workers. Moreover, in those units where there were no Standing Orders workers were being classified as 'temporary' even though they were engaged for work which was of a casual nature. Similarly, it was also observed that for work which was of a regular nature, workers were engaged on temporary basis but the managements called them as casual workers. The system of engaging *badli* workers was found to be entirely absent in the industry.

#### 2.9. Length of Service

Data regarding length of service of production and related workers (including supervisory) employed directly and covered under the Plantations Labour Act were collected during the course of the Survey. It may be mentioned that even though the managements are required to maintain leave register in respect of each employee showing *inter alia* the date of appointment of each person, it was observed that some of the estates did not maintain such registers and some of them which did keep the register did not have details regarding the date of appointment. Consequently, data collected from such units are based on the information given by the managements. On the basis of data collected from 9 rubber estates, the Labour Investigation Committee estimated that 52 per cent of the workers were having length of service 'between 0 and 1 year', 18 per cent. 'between 1 and 5 years', 8 per cent. 'between 5 and 10 years' and 22 per cent. in the group 'over 10 years'. The results of the Survey indicate some improvement as only about 32 per cent. of workers were in the service group "less than 1 year". Details are given in the following Statement:—

#### STATEMENT 2.6

#### DISTRIBUTION OF PRODUCTION WORKERS ACCORDING TO LENGTH OF SERVICE— OCTOBER 1961

Size	Estimated number of production workers	Percentage of workers with a service of				
		Less than one year	1 or more but less than 5 years	5 or more but less than 10 years	10 years or more but less than 15 years	15 years and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Large Estates ..	11,677	25.7	6.5	21.5	22.3	24.0
Small Estates ..	6,687	43.7	6.8	33.7	11.8	4.0
All Estates ..	18,364	32.2	6.6	26.0	18.5	16.7

The main reason for the concentration of a little less than one-third of the total production workers in the group 'less than one year' is due to the fact that in Rubber Plantations a fairly large number of workers are appointed for a short duration in busy season to cope up with work.

## 2.10. Absenteeism

Data on absenteeism\* relating to production workers, other than casual, were collected for a period of 12 months ending 31st October, 1961. However, the statistics are subject to certain limitations. For instance, it was generally noticed that the managements used a common symbol 'a' for recording non-reporting of workers in the plantations either of their own accord or due to lay off or refusal of work by the authorities. Moreover, when a worker left an estate for good, his name continued to feature in the register with a mark 'u' for a good number of days. Such a practice was prevalent particularly among some of the small plantations. It was also noticed that in few units no proper register of attendance was kept. In such cases data had to be compiled on the basis of such other records as were available. Though such instances were quite few, yet in such situations great reliance had to be placed on the version of the managements. Due to all these factors one is inclined to conclude that absenteeism rates reflected by the statistics collected are rather on the high side. The Bureau very much desired to collect causes for absenteeism. Since the managements do not generally keep records for the causes of absences no detailed information could be collected but had to be satisfied with general information given by the employers, etc. The following Statement gives the absenteeism rate in the large as well as small estates during the period November, 1960 to October, 1961:—

### STATEMENT 2.7

#### ESTIMATED ABSENTEEISM RATE IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS DURING NOVEMBER, 1960 TO OCTOBER, 1961

Month	Rate of Absenteeism in		
	Large Estates	Small Estates	All Estates
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
November, 1960 .. .. .	12.3	21.3	14.9
December, 1960 .. .. .	9.7	8.6	9.4
January, 1961 .. .. .	14.4	13.2	14.0
February, 1961 .. .. .	54.9	49.4	53.4
March, 1961 .. .. .	13.9	14.7	14.1
April, 1961 .. .. .	12.9	12.5	12.8
May, 1961 .. .. .	18.2	23.2	19.7
June, 1961 .. .. .	27.9	36.0	30.3
July, 1961 .. .. .	24.4	34.4	27.3
August, 1961 .. .. .	24.1	33.8	26.9
September, 1961 .. .. .	11.6	15.2	12.7
October, 1961 .. .. .	11.2	9.8	10.8
Average .. .. .	19.3	22.0	20.1

\*Absenteeism is the failure of the worker to report on the job when he was scheduled to work but does not include absences on account of strikes or lockouts or lay off. The rate of absenteeism is the percentage of man-days lost due to absence to the total number of man days scheduled to work during the month.

It will be noticed from the above Statement that the annual average rate of absenteeism was about 20 per cent. in the industry. As between different months the rate was the highest (53·4%) in February and lowest (9·4%) in December. These features were common in estates of both the size groups. The chief reason for high absenteeism in February was found to be that most of the workers were allowed to go on annual leave during this month because the month is generally the 'off season' for Rubber Plantations in all the areas. Usually during this month only a few workers are retained in the estate for essential maintenance work.

The high rate of absenteeism noticed in June, July and August is due to the rainy season. Most of the Rubber Plantations are situated in Kerala or in areas bordering Kerala State. In this area the rainy season starts near about the end of May and the intensity of rains is the highest during June, July and August. It becomes difficult for workers to attend to work during heavy rains. Moreover they are aware that normal tapping work cannot be done in such conditions.

#### 2·11. *Labour Turnover*

Statistics of labour turnover were also collected for the same period and the same group of workers as for absenteeism. The results are given in the following Statements separately for accessions and separations:—

#### STATEMENT 2·8

##### ESTIMATED ACCESSION RATE IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS DURING NOVEMBER, 1960 TO OCTOBER, 1961

Month	Rate of Accession in		
	Large Estates	Small Estates	All Estates
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
November, 1960 .. .. .	0·2	0·2	0·2
December, 1960 .. .. .	0·2	..	0·2
January, 1961 .. .. .	..	..	..
February, 1961 .. .. .	1·9	..	1·3
March, 1961 .. .. .	1·5	1·8	1·6
April, 1961 .. .. .	3·3	1·5	2·8
May, 1961 .. .. .	0·4	0·6	0·4
June, 1961 .. .. .	0·3	0·6	0·4
July, 1961 .. .. .	1·7	..	1·2
August, 1961 .. .. .	0·2	..	0·1
September, 1961 .. .. .	0·8	0·2	0·6
October, 1961 .. .. .	0·1	0·4	0·2
Average .. .. .	0·9	0·4	0·8

**STATEMENT 2-9**  
**ESTIMATED SEPARATION RATE IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS DURING**  
**NOVEMBER, 1960, TO OCTOBER, 1961**

Month	Rate of Separation in		
	Large Estates	Small Estates	All Estates
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
November, 1960 .. .. .	0.2	0.5	0.3
December, 1960 .. .. .	0.8	0.9	0.8
January, 1961 .. .. .	0.5	1.3	0.7
February, 1961 .. .. .	2.8	2.0	2.6
March, 1961 .. .. .	0.4	0.9	0.5
April, 1961 .. .. .	1.1	0.2	0.8
May, 1961 .. .. .	1.3	0.6	1.1
June, 1961 .. .. .	0.4	0.4	0.4
July, 1961 .. .. .	1.7	1.3	1.6
August, 1961 .. .. .	1.8	0.5	1.4
September, 1961 .. .. .	3.2	0.6	2.4
October, 1961 .. .. .	0.6	0.4	0.5
Average .. .. .	1.2	0.8	1.1

The above figures show that both the accession and separation rates in the industry as a whole were not high being of the order of nearly one per cent. However, it may be pointed out that the data relate to only permanent and temporary workers, and exclude casual labourers. Obviously if casual workers were also taken into account the turnover rate would have been fairly high since nearly 17 per cent. of the working force in large estates and 39 per cent. in small estates consisted of casual workers during busy season and their services were terminated as soon as the work for which they were engaged ended. Data collected during the Survey relating to separations by causes are given below:—

**STATEMENT 2-10**  
**SEPARATIONS BY CAUSES IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS DURING**  
**NOVEMBER, 1960, TO OCTOBER, 1961**

Size	Causes of separations			
	Discharge or Dismissals	Quits*	Retirement or Death	Others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Large Estates .. .. .	15.6	81.2	3.2	..
Small Estates .. .. .	31.5	62.9	5.6	..
All Estates .. .. .	18.9	77.4	3.7	..

\*Quits are termination of employments initiated by employees because of acceptance of jobs elsewhere, dissatisfaction, marriage, maternity, ill-health, unauthorised absence, etc.

The chief cause of separations reported by managements is 'quits' accounting for as much as about 77 per cent. of the separations. Next in order of importance is discharge or dismissals which constituted nearly 19 per cent. 'Retirement or Death' was almost an insignificant cause of separations.

### 2.12 Recruitment

The Survey shows that there has been a noticeable change in the system of recruitment in Rubber Plantations since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their investigation. Probably ever since the beginning of the Rubber Plantation in the country employers depended entirely on *Kanganies* or *Mistries* for their entire supply of labour. These *Kanganies*, who were generally drawn from the ranks of workers themselves, acted as intermediaries. The employers used to intimate their requirements to *Kanganies* and paid them some advance money depending upon the number of workers required. The *Kanganies* collected the required number of workers and brought them to the estate. Workers brought by a particular *Kangani* worked under his supervision and the employer paid commission (at times called head money) to the *Kangani* generally on the basis of earnings of workers brought by him. The system naturally led to various abuses and was subject of severe criticism by the Labour Investigation Committee.

The question of abolition of this system was specifically discussed in the 3rd Session of the Industrial Committee on Plantations in 1950. On the basis of the deliberations of the Committee and in consultation with the State Governments, the Government of India formulated a scheme limiting the number of labourers under each *Kangani* to 40 and providing for the establishment of estate gang. They also suggested various other measures with a view to curbing and eradicating the evil. In Madras State an agreement, known as the 'Valparai Agreement' was reached between employers and representatives of *Kanganies* in 1958 for the abolition of the *Kangani* system. At the time of the Survey it was found that the system no longer existed in any Rubber Plantation. In Kerala, a committee consisting of representatives of employers and *Kanganies* under the chairmanship of Shri Balagangadhar Menon was appointed in 1957. The Committee suggested total abolition of the *Kangani* system with effect from 1st April, 1959 and made certain recommendations for the rehabilitation of the *Kanganies* and payment of compensation to those *Kanganies* who were not willing to continue in the estate. The recommendations of the Committee were accepted by the State Government with some modifications in December, 1959. However, the employers did not agree to implement them and the matter was still under consideration at the time of the Survey\*. However, managements of several estates had concluded individual agreements by means of which their old *Kanganies* were either rehabilitated as Labour Supervisors or were allowed to retire after receiving compensation. Similar agreements were also concluded by some of the managements in Mysore.

The Survey results show that of the total estimated working force of 19,154 workers on 31st October, 1961 in Rubber Plantations in the country about 56 per cent. had been recruited directly by the managements at the

\*It is now understood that in September, 1962 an agreement was reached between the parties through the agency of the Plantation Labour Committee, and the *Kangani* system no longer exists in the State.



estates and the rest, i.e., about 44 per cent. were those who were recruited through intermediaries like *Kanganies*. The proportion of workers recruited directly by the managements was as high as 78 per cent. in small estates as against the corresponding percentage of 43 in the case of large estates. The reason for the high proportion of workers recruited through *Kanganies* in large estates is probably due to the fact that many of the old workers recruited through *Kanganies* were continuing in service.

### 2.13. *Regulation of Employment of Casual Workers*

The practice of employing casual labour is in force but there is no regular or *ad-hoc* arrangement to systematise or to regulate the employment of casual labour. Casual labour is engaged according to the needs of the managements and final absorption of the persons into permanent cadre is at the discretion of the managements.

### 2.14. *Training and Apprenticeship*

In Rubber Plantations excepting the tapping work, no skill is required for any operation. Even for tapping, no training or apprenticeship is given excepting that the job is learnt by the workers by associating themselves with the old workers who are already on the job.

## CHAPTER III

### WAGES AND EARNINGS

#### 3.1. *Minimum Wages in Rubber Plantations*

Till the time of the enquiry of the Labour Investigation Committee and for a few years thereafter wage rates of workers employed in Rubber Plantations were governed by mutual agreements between associations of employers and unions of workers. As a result, time-rates of wages were generally uniform in various plantation districts. The Labour Investigation Committee reported that in 1944 the daily rates of wages in the Industry were 6 Annas (Re. 0.37) for men, 5 Annas (Re. 0.31) for women and 4 Annas (Re. 0.25) for children. Piece-rates for tappers, wherever they were being paid on piece-rate basis alone, the Committee reported, varied from 7 pies (i.e., Re. 0.04) to 15 pies (i.e., Re. 0.08) per pound of dry rubber. Whenever the yield did not permit the earning of full standard wage, managements paid on a task basis of tapping of 250 to 300 trees, irrespective of the yield. In some cases a combination of the two basis was used for payment to tappers.

There was an upward movement of wages after 1945 generally on the basis of agreements between the two parties. In 1947 the average wage rate of workers in Rubber Plantations in Kerala ranged from Re. 0.95 in Mundakayam to Rs. 1.28 in the South Travancore area.

With the inclusion of plantation industry among the scheduled employments under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 wages of workers employed in Rubber Plantations came within the sphere of State regulation.

Accordingly in 1952 the State Governments of Kerala, Madras and Mysore fixed minimum rates of wages for workers employed in Rubber Plantations. The Governments of Madras and Mysore fixed time-rates of wages while the Government of Kerala fixed time rates for all workers other than tappers for whom piece-rates were fixed. For tappers, there was a guaranteed time-rate and also piece-rates on the basis of standard output of an average worker. The guaranteed time-rate and the piece-rate were so fixed that they enabled the worker to earn a wage equal to the minimum wage plus a premium.

The wage rates fixed in 1952 in the three States did not undergo any change until October, 1956 in Madras, May, 1957 in Mysore and November, 1957 in Kerala. In the case of Mysore, the rates were again revised in 1960 and in other States there was no further revision. The revision discussed above were as a result of memoranda of settlement under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1957 in all the three States. Thus, the time-rates of wages which were prevalent at the time of the Survey were as follows :—

#### (a) Kerala

				Minimum Time Rate per Day (for time-rated workers)		Guaranteed Time Rate per Day (for Piece rated workers)	
				Rs. As. P.	Rs. nP.	Rs. As. P.	Rs. nP.
Men	..	..	..	1 11 6	(1.72)	0 14 0	(0.87)
Women (a) Tappers	..	..	..	1 8 0	(1.50)	0 14 0	(0.87)
(b) Others	..	..	..	1 5 0	(1.31)	0 11 0	(0.69)
Adolescents	..	..	..	1 1 0	(1.06)	0 9 0	(0.56)
Children	..	..	..	0 13 9	(0.85)	0 7 3	(0.45)

As regards piece rates for tappers, there was no change in the rates notified by the Government of Kerala in their Notification No. L1-9632, 51/DD dated 30th June, 1952. The piece-rates were fixed on the basis of a standard output of an average worker. Since the yield varied according to rubber (i.e., seedling rubber, budded rubber, clonal seedling rubber, etc.), the rubber was classified into four classes on the basis of yield and for each class a standard daily output and rate per pound of rubber collected was fixed. The rates fixed were as follows:

Class of Estates	Standard output per tapper per day	Rate of payment
Class I, i.e., yielding below 250 lbs. per acre per annum	3 lbs.	Re. 0.4.10 (Re. 0.29) per lb. for the first 3 lbs. of rubber collected on a day.
Class II, i.e., yielding 250 to 400 lbs. per acre per annum	6 lbs.	Re. 0.2.5 (Re. 0.15) per lb. for the first 6 lbs. of rubber collected on a day.
Class III, i.e., yielding 401 to 600 lbs. per acre per annum	10 lbs.	Re. 0.1.5 (Re. 0.09) per lb. for the first 10 lbs. of rubber collected on a day.
Class IV, i.e., yielding 601 lbs. or above per acre per annum	14 lbs.	Re. 0.1.0 (Re. 0.06) per lb. for the first 14 lbs. of rubber collected on a day.

It was provided that if the tapping average in any month fell below the standard output for the particular class of estate then the actual average would be taken as the standard for that month and payment would be made for rubber collected on each day of that month up to the new standard output at a revised piece rate. This rate was to be such that after deducting 10 per cent. from the new standard output, the balance of the quantity would give an amount equal to the difference between the minimum wage and the guaranteed time rate of male worker.

Category	Rate of Wages Per Day			
	Men	Women	Adolescents	Children
(b) Madras				
	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.
1. Estates having 400 planted acres or less ..	1.56	1.16	0.94	0.72
2. Estates having more than 400 planted acres	1.72	1.31	1.00	0.72
(c) Mysore				
1. Estates having 50 planted acres or more ..	1.62	1.23	1.00	0.80
2. Estates having less than 50 planted acres ..	1.53	1.12	0.95	0.80

The revision of wages discussed in the foregoing paragraphs relate to workers other than those termed as 'staff'. For staff members, there were different scales of pay for the various categories in the States of Madras, Kerala and Mysore. As a result of an agreement arrived at between the United Planters'

Association of Southern India (representing member estates in the three States) and the Estates Staff Union of South India (representing the Staff employed in the three States) on 28th October, 1957, the scales of pay for the various categories were revised. This agreement which was ratified by the States' associations of employers by a separate agreement in Kerala, Mysore and Madras fixed the scale of pay of a Junior clerk at Rs. 40-3-70-4-90. The agreement also provided for fixation of scale of pay for the different categories of estates, e.g., large, medium, and small. There were also provisions in the agreement for the payment of gratuity, increased contributions of Provident Fund, etc. This agreement was in force at the time of the Survey in different States.

### 3.2. Wage Revision

Data collected during the Survey regarding wage revision since 1956 indicate that there were wage revisions in all the large estates. In the case of small estates, however, only 85 per cent. of them reported wage revision. The units which did not report any wage revision were small estates located in the interior places. It was, however, noticed that of the 2 sampled units, where there was no wage revision, one was paying minimum wages as fixed by the State Government, and in the other unit wage rates allowed were below the minimum wages fixed. In all other estates, large as well small, the wage rates were governed by the agreements arrived at between the parties in their respective States.

### 3.3. Pay Periods

With the application of Payment of Wages Act to plantations since 1947, the pay period of workers in plantations has been regulated. The data collected during the Survey indicate that the system of settling wages once in a month was predominant in the large as well as small estates. The following Statement gives details :—

#### STATEMENT 3.1

#### DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR PAY PERIOD—OCTOBER, 1961

Size	Estimated total number of workers	Percentage of workers whose pay period was			
		Month	Fortnight	Week	Others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Large Estates .. ..	12,224	87.6	..	6.9	5.5
Small Estates .. ..	6,930	61.1	..	37.6	1.3
All Estates .. ..	19,154	78.0	..	18.0	4.0

It is estimated that 78 per cent. of the workers in the industry were monthly paid and the rest received their dues at shorter intervals. Usually, all permanent production workers as well as the staff members received their wages once in a month. The proportion of workers whose pay period was a month was higher (88%) in large estates than in smaller ones (61%). Weekly paid

employees accounted for 18 per cent. of the total workers in the industry and most of them were in small estates. In fact such workers constituted nearly 38 per cent. of the total workers in small estates as against about 7 in large estates. The rest of the workers were being paid wages either once in 10 days or daily. All such persons were casual workers.

Even though the predominant pay period was a 'month' it was observed, during the course of the Survey that workers were being given some advance, usually once in a week, which were adjusted at the time of settlement just after the month was over.

### 3.4. *Average Daily Earnings*

3.4.1. *All Workers*—In view of the fact that a detailed Occupational Wage Survey was conducted by the Bureau in 1958-59, no attempt was made in the course of the Survey to collect data pertaining to earnings of workers by occupations. However, some statistics relating to earnings of broad groups of workers, e.g., all workers (i.e., all those covered under the Plantations Labour Act), all production workers (separately for men, women, adolescents and children), lowest paid workers, clerical employees, and watch and ward and other related workers were collected. The information so collected is presented in the following Statement. For maintaining comparability of the data, information relating to earnings was collected for one period immediately preceding 31st October, 1961.

#### STATEMENT 3.2

#### ESTIMATED AVERAGE DAILY EARNINGS OF WORKERS IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—OCTOBER, 1961

(In Rupees)

Size	Average earnings of					
	All workers	Production workers				
		Men	Women	Adolescents	Children	All Production Workers
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Large Estates ..	.. 2.31	2.44	1.67	1.72	..	2.23
Small Estates ..	.. 2.18	2.42	1.61	1.06	0.79	2.10
All Estates ..	.. 2.27	2.43	1.64	1.13	0.79	2.18

The average daily earnings of "all workers" in Rubber Plantations in the country worked out to Rs. 2.27 in October, 1961. The average daily earnings of "all workers" were more (Rs. 2.31) in the case of large estates than in the small estates (Rs. 2.18).

3.4.2. *Production Workers*—Among production workers, the average daily earnings were Rs. 2.18, in the industry as a whole the corresponding figures for large and small estates being Rs. 2.23 and Rs. 2.10 per day respectively. The average earnings of women workers were Rs. 1.64 per day while adolescents earned, on an average Rs. 1.13 per day. Usually women and adolescents worked on time-rated occupations but it was observed that in a few estates they were engaged for tapping work as well.

**3.4.3. Lowest Paid Workers:**—The following statement shows the earnings of workers in the lowest paid occupations among production workers:

### STATEMENT 3.3

#### ESTIMATED AVERAGE DAILY EARNINGS OF LOWEST PAID WORKERS— OCTOBER, 1961

(In Rupees)

Size	Men	Women	Adolescents	Children	All
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Large Estates .. ..	1.78	1.32	1.72	..	1.55
Small Estates .. ..	1.78	1.33	1.07	0.79	1.49
All Estates .. ..	1.78	1.32	1.09	0.79	1.53

There is practically no difference in the earnings of men and women lowest paid workers as between the large and small plantations. In the case of adolescents, the higher earnings noticed in large plantations were due to the fact that the adolescents employed in one of the sampled units were being paid wages at the rates fixed for adult males.

As regards the occupations in which the lowest paid workers were employed, it may be mentioned that in plantations there is no rigid classification of workers. Those who are recruited as 'field labour' are expected to attend to any work. The minimum rate of wages fixed was the same for all the time-rated workers who were generally engaged on jobs such as weeding, pruning, manuring, lopping, etc.

**3.4.4. Earnings of Clerical and Watch and Ward Staff**—In the course of the Survey, data were also collected concerning earnings, without break-up by components, of clerical staff and persons employed as watch and ward and other services and the results are given in the following Statement:—

### STATEMENT 3.4

#### ESTIMATED AVERAGE DAILY EARNINGS OF CLERICAL AND WATCH AND WARD STAFF IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—OCTOBER, 1961

(In Rupees)

Size	Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)	Watch and Ward and Other Services
(1)	(2)	(3)
Large Estates .. ..	7.72	1.88
Small Estates .. ..	7.27	1.95*
All Estates .. ..	7.58	1.90

\*The higher earnings of the watch and ward workers in the small estates as compared to those in the large estates are due to the fact that in one of the sampled units in the small size group the rates of pay of watchmen were quite high as against the normal rates which are either equal to the wage rate of field labour or slightly less. If the particular unit where the rate was unusually high is not taken into consideration then the average earnings of the watch and ward workers in that group comes to Rs. 1.73 per day.

The above average daily earnings of the clerical staff are much higher when compared with the average earnings of a production worker, which were Rs. 2.18 in the country as a whole. However, compared to production workers the average daily earnings of persons in the group 'Watch and Ward and Other Services' were less i.e., Rs. 1.90.

### 3.5. Components of Earnings

The following Statement gives the earnings by components of all workers in the Rubber Plantations in the country:

#### STATEMENT 3.5

##### ESTIMATED AVERAGE DAILY EARNINGS BY COMPONENTS OF ALL WORKERS IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS DURING OCTOBER, 1961

(In Rupees)

Size	Basic Earnings (Basic Wage + D.A.)	Produc- tion bonus	House rent allow- ance	Trans- port allow- ance	Over- time pay	Other cash allow- ances	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Large Estates	1.94 (84.0)	0.29 (12.5)	..	..	*	0.08 (3.5)	2.31 (100.0)
Small Estates	1.89 (86.7)	0.21 (9.6)	0.01 (0.5)	*	*	0.07 (3.2)	2.18 (100.0)
All Estates ..	1.92 (84.9)	0.26 (11.4)	..	*	0.01 (0.2)	0.08 (3.5)	2.27 (100.0)

NOTE—Figures in brackets are percentages to total in col. 8.

\*Indicates that the amount was less than Re. 0.005.

3.5.1. *Basic Earnings*—Basic earnings i.e., consolidated wages or basic wage and dearness allowance wherever it was paid separately constituted the bulk accounting for as much as about 85 per cent. of the total earnings of workers in the industry in the country. Excepting persons employed for supervisory jobs or clerical work (termed as 'staff'), all workers\* in the sampled estates were found to be getting only consolidated wages.

3.5.2. *Dearness Allowance*—Even though the minimum wage notifications published by the State Governments of Kerala and Mysore in 1952 provided for payment of dearness allowance, as a separate component, subsequent revisions that took place in 1957 fixed only an all-inclusive wage. As regards Madras, the minimum wage fixed in 1952 was only at the consolidated rates. Thus, the position, as at the time of the Survey was that all the workers other than those termed as 'staff' were in receipt of consolidated wages only.

Dearness allowance was being paid to the staff members since 1947 at the rates notified by the United Planters' Association of Southern India. The rate of dearness allowance was fixed according to the slab of basic pay as per the details given below. These rates have been in force since 1947 and there has been no change since then.

\*i.e., all daily-rated production workers, watch and ward staff or persons engaged on daily rates in other services like *Ayaks*.

## STATEMENT 3·6

## DEARNESS ALLOWANCE PAID TO 'STAFF' MEMBERS IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—1961-62

Range of basic pay	Rate of d.a. per month	Range of basic pay	Rate of d.a. per month
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
	Rs.		Rs.
Upto Rs. 41 .. ..	33	Rs. 55 to 57 .. ..	40
Rs. 42 and 43 .. ..	34	Rs. 58 and 59 .. ..	41
Rs. 44 and 45 .. ..	35	Rs. 60 to 62 .. ..	42
Rs. 46 and 47 .. ..	36	Rs. 63 to 65 .. ..	43
Rs. 48 to 50 .. ..	37	Rs. 66 and 67 .. ..	44
Rs. 51 and 52 .. ..	38	Rs. 68 to 70 .. ..	45
Rs. 53 and 54 .. ..	39	Rs. 71 to 73 .. ..	46
		Rs. 74 and 75 .. ..	47

Those drawing more than Rs. 75 per month as basic pay were entitled to an extra dearness allowance calculated at the rate of Re. 0·12 for each additional one rupee of basic pay when the consumer price index number for Madras city was above 200.

3·6. *Production/Incentive Bonus*

Next to basic earnings, production or incentive bonus was the most important item accounting for Re. 0·26 or 11·4 per cent. of the total daily earnings of the workers in Rubber Plantations. The system of paying an extra allowance, called 'over pound allowance' as an incentive for the extra production over the norms fixed was in vogue in most of the Rubber Plantations in the country but it was restricted only to tappers. The rate of payment in various estates depended upon the class to which that estate belonged. The estates were categorised into 4 classes on the basis of the average yield during the previous year and a standard output was also determined for each class\*. The norms which were generally prevalent for the different classes of estates and the rate at which the over pound allowance was paid for the extra production are indicated below.

## STATEMENT 3·7

## RATE OF OVER POUND ALLOWANCE IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—1961-62

Class of estate	Norms fixed	Rate of incentive for achieving production over the norms fixed
(1)	(2)	(3)
Class I ..	3 lbs. of Rubber ..	1 anna (i.e., Re. 0·06) for every lb. of rubber over and above 3 lbs.
Class II ..	6 lbs. of Rubber ..	1 anna (Re. 0·06) for every lb. of rubber over and above 6 lbs.
Class III ..	10 lbs. of Rubber ..	Re. 0·1-6 (Re. 0·09) for every pound of rubber over and above 10 lbs.
Class IV ..	14 lbs. of Rubber ..	Re. 0·1-6 (Re. 0·09) for every pound of rubber over and above 14 lbs.

\*The classification of estates and standard output determined were the same as described on p. 18 in connection with piece rates for tapper.



### 3.7. Other Cash Allowances

Under this head, the main items were: (i) servant allowance, (2) *Kangani* commission, (3) cash allowance *in lieu* of *cumbli* (woollen blanket), and (4) food grain allowances. All these taken together accounted for only 3.5 per cent. of the total earnings of a worker.

3.7.1. *Servant Allowance*—The servant allowance was being paid in all the estates in large size group and in about 61 per cent. of the units in the small size group to monthly-rated employees who were termed as 'staff' and the sum paid was usually Rs. 35.00 per month.

3.7.2. *Kangani Commission*—Though as mentioned in chapter II, attempts have been made in recent years to abolish *Kangani* system, in about 47 per cent. of estates *Kanganies* (*Mistries*) who had brought labour for the estate were paid some commission. This commission was paid to each *Kangani* usually at the rate of 1 anna (i.e., Re. 0.06) per day of attendance of each such worker brought by him who was still in the service of the estate.

3.7.3. *Cumbli Allowance*—This allowance was given at the rate of Re. 0.03 per day worked to those workers who were engaged for day to day work. Permanent workers got the *cumbli* allowance once in a year at the rate of Rs. 9.50 per annum.

3.7.4. *Food Grain Concession Allowance*—Prior to November, 1957, most of the estates used to supply food grains to workers and staff at concessional rates. Such a system was discontinued from November, 1957. However, some of the estates (55 per cent.) were found to be paying some cash allowance ranging from Rs. 8 to Rs. 20 per month *in lieu* of concession supply of food grains to only staff members who were in receipt of food grains prior to November, 1957 and who continued to be in service with the managements.

3.7.5 *Meals Allowance*—The system of paying such an allowance was found to be in vogue in only some of the estates in Kanyakumari district in Madras State. The payment was limited to staff members and the amount ranged from Rs. 10.00 to Rs. 12.00 per month.

3.7.6. *Way Expenses*—The Survey shows that there was a wide-spread practice of paying way expenses to workers as well as staff once in a year for going to their native places on earned leave. It is estimated that in 1961 such a practice existed in nearly 83 per cent. of Rubber Plantations. The payment made to staff was regulated by an agreement entered into between the employees represented by the Estate Staff Union of South India and employers represented by the United Planters' Association of Southern India in 1957. Under this agreement members of the staff are entitled to travelling expenses at the rate of Re. 0.04 per mile for self and wife if receiving less than Rs. 50 as basic pay and Re. 0.08 if receiving a basic pay of Rs. 50 or more. The mileage counted is for journey from estate to the registered home address of the employee and back. Payment for wife is subject to her residing in the estate.

Payment to workers was not regulated by any agreement. However, all the estates covered were found to be paying actual rail or bus fare for one way

journey i.e., either from estate to worker's native place or *vice versa*, for the worker alone. The sum was paid only after the worker rejoined the estate.

### 3.8. Bonus

None of the estates surveyed had any scheme of profit sharing bonus. However, the system of paying annual bonus was in vogue in 95 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations. It is reported that almost all Rubber Plantations have been paying such a bonus since 1947. The rate of payment in the case of workers (i.e., other than staff) is generally decided in tripartite meetings each year and the agreement reached is recorded in the form of a memorandum of settlement under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. In Kerala, till 1954 all estates paid such bonus at a uniform rate to their workers which varied from 4 per cent. to  $8\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. of basic earnings during the year in question. Since 1955 the rate of payment has been different for (i) estates covered under the Plantations Labour Act and admeasuring (a) upto 200 acres, and (b) over 200 acres, and (ii) not covered under the Plantations Labour Act. During the three years ending 1959 the rates have been as follows: (a) estates up to 200 acres,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  per cent., (b) estates above 200 acres  $7\frac{1}{4}$  per cent., and (c) estates not covered under the Plantations Labour Act  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. In Madras there has been no such classification and all estates have been paying bonus at a uniform rate which ranged from 4 per cent. to  $10\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. of basic earnings. During 1958 and 1959 the rate was 9 per cent.

For staff members, there has been no specific agreement for the payment of bonus. It has generally been paid at the discretion of the managements. The quantum of bonus for the staff ranged from 1 month's basic pay to 4 months' basic pay of employees.

There were practically no conditions attached to the payment of bonus either to workers or members of staff. Data collected during the Survey indicate that all the large estates had the system of paying bonus while among the small estates about 93 per cent. were found to be paying bonus.

### 3.9. Fines and Deductions

The Labour Investigation Committee had reported that fines were rare in plantations. They were imposed only when worker's cattle trespassed on estate land. However, there was a system of forfeiting a part or whole of daily earnings of workers as a punishment. In the course of the present Survey no such practices came to notice in any of the estates. It is reported that the system of imposing fines was not in vogue in any Rubber Plantation and deductions, wherever made, were only those which were authorised under the Payment of Wages Act. Deductions generally related to provident fund, weekly advances, etc.

## CHAPTER IV

### WORKING CONDITIONS

At the time the Labour Investigation Committee conducted a detailed investigation into the conditions of labour in plantations in India there was no law in the country\* for regulating the conditions of work of plantation labour. Consequently, the Committee found that the condition varied enormously from place to place. They, therefore, recommended enactment of a Plantation Labour Code by the Government of India. This recommendation was accepted and in 1951 a Plantations Labour Act was passed which covered not only working conditions but other aspects as well. Thus, when the present Survey was conducted there was a law for regulating working conditions. The following paragraphs describe the findings of the Survey.

#### 4.1. *Hours of Work*

The Plantations Labour Act prescribes only weekly hours and provides that in the case of adult workers it should not exceed 54; it was found during the Survey that in all the estates weekly hours were 48 and the daily hours of work were 8. In the case of adolescents and children the Act prescribes only a 40-hour week. At the time of the Survey nearly 11 per cent. of large estates and 23 per cent. of small estates (or 20 per cent. of all estates) employed adolescents. All such large estates complied with the provision of the law and had fixed a 40-hour week for adolescents. But small estates were not respecting the law and required adolescent workers to put in the same number of hours as adults. Such estates were in Kerala and Madras States.

Children were employed in only 15.3 per cent. of small estates (or 11.0 per cent. of all estates). Half of these respected the law concerning hours of work for children but in the rest child workers were required to put in 48 hours in a week and their daily hours of work were generally 8.

Since the nature of work in plantations is akin to agriculture, the question of different shifts does not arise. In fact, there is only one shift during the day and there is no night shift at all. The shift usually starts in the morning and ends in the evening. The usual system is that *mistries* or watchmen give an indication through a bell or bugle or siren so as to enable workers who generally live in the quarters in the estate itself to reach the time office for a roll call. Thereafter, they are diverted to the different areas according to the assignment of work that might be made by the supervisors.

The spreadover of the daily hours of work ranged from 9 to 9½ but in most (94 per cent.) of the estates it was 9. In fact all the small estates had a spread-over of 9 hours only. Among large estates, 79 per cent. had spread over of 9 hours and the remaining had 9½ hours. As regards the rest interval, it was uniformly one hour in small estates while in large estates it ranged from 1 to 1½ hours. The timings as notified by the managements were found to be observed.

---

\*Only in the former Cochin State, there were Plantation Labour Rules administered by the State of Cochin since 1st May, 1937.

## 4.2. Task System

In the context of the discussion of daily hours of work, it may be mentioned that in Rubber Plantations there is a task system. At the time of the enquiry of the Labour Investigation Committee there was no regulation of daily hours of work and therefore the length of the working day of workers depended on the task assigned. At the time of the present Survey also the task system prevailed. However, the tasks were now being fixed generally by managements in consultation with workers or their unions. The tasks were so fixed that they could be completed within the hours specified under the Act. Any worker who completed his day's task was free to go home irrespective of the fact whether the working hours were over or not.

## 4.3. Conservancy

In 1944-45, when the Labour Investigation Committee enquired into the conditions of labour in plantations, there were generally no conservancy arrangements in the fields where workers worked throughout the day. The Committee in their report\* strongly recommended the need for appropriate arrangements specially for safeguarding workers against hookworms. Largely as a result of the recommendations of the Committee a specific provision was incorporated in the Plantations Labour Act under which it is incumbent on managements to provide sufficient number of latrines and urinals separately for males and females, so situated as to be convenient and accessible to workers. The Act also requires that the latrines and the urinals should be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. The State Governments are empowered to prescribe the scale and standard of latrines and urinals.

The rules framed by the Government of Kerala require every plantation to provide latrines on the scale of one latrine for every 50 acres of the area under cultivation or part thereof subject to the condition that there is at least one latrine each for either sex. The rules also make it clear that the latrines other than those connected with an efficient water borne sewage system should comply with the requirements of Public Health authorities. There is no mention in the rules regarding the urinals.

The Survey reveals that in the country as a whole, only 14 per cent. of the Rubber estates had some conservancy arrangements in work-places of the estates. The percentage of units which had provided latrines was 10.5 among large estates and 15.3 among small estates. The types of latrines provided at the work-places by the estates differed as between the large and small estates. Whereas all the latrines provided by the large estates were of the type 'water borne septic tank', in the case of small estates, they were mostly 'dry type pan'. The main reason for the non-provision of conservancy arrangements as per the Act seems to be due to the practical difficulties in carrying out this requirement. Some of the employers were of the view that latrines were required to be provided only in the lines, i.e., where the quarters for workers had been provided. It was understood from discussion with the State Officials by the Field Staff that provision of latrines are insisted upon only in lines and not at work-places. It was also understood from the managements that the practical difficulties

---

\*Report on an enquiry into conditions of labour in plantations in India, by D.V. Rego, I.C.S. pp. 161-162.

relating to the construction of latrines and urinals in the field were discussed at the meetings of Plantations Advisory Boards and there appeared to be no objection to the proposal of having latrines only in the lines.

#### 4.4. Leave and Holidays with Pay

The Labour Investigation Committee, which enquired into conditions of workers in plantations during 1944-45, reported that at that time as a general rule there were no paid holidays. Only a few estates gave a paid holiday at Christmas. With the enactment of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 workers employed in plantations are now entitled to annual leave (earned leave) with wages as also sick leave under certain conditions. As a result of certain Acts passed by the Governments of Madras and Kerala, workers are also entitled to certain national and festival holidays with pay. Thus, the only type of leave for which there is no statutory provision is casual leave. Nevertheless, in a large number of estates such a leave was also being allowed with pay. The following Statement gives the details of the estates granting various types of leave :—

#### STATEMENT 4.1

#### PERCENTAGE OF ESTATES GRANTING VARIOUS TYPES OF LEAVE WITH PAY 1961-62

Size			Number of estates*	Estimated percentage of estates granting			
				Earned leave (i.e., annual leave)	Casual leave	Sick leave	Festival and national holidays
(1)			(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Large Estates	..	..	38	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Small Estates	..	..	98	91.8	76.5	84.7	91.8
All Estates	..	..	136	94.1	83.1	89.0	94.1

\*Number of estates given in this Statement relates to estates which were in the frame (1960) and which continued to exist during the time of the Survey.

4.4.1. *Earned Leave*—The Plantations Labour Act stipulates that annual leave with wages shall be allowed to every worker at the rate of 1 day for every 20 days worked if adults and at the rate of 1 day for 15 days in the case of young persons (i.e., adolescents and children). From the figures given above it would be seen that 94 per cent. of the estates were granting annual leave to their workers. Those which were not granting such leave were all small plantations which did not employ any regular labour but engaged casual labour as and when required. The rate of payment for the leave period was as per the provisions of the Act in the case of workers other than members of staff\*. Monthly-rated staff, though most of them came within the definition of the term 'worker' under the Plantations Labour Act, were governed by the provision relating to leave mentioned in the 'Standing Orders' for the staff regarding earned leave and enjoyed better benefits. They were entitled to 30 days' leave in a year with full basic pay, dearness allowance, servant allowance, etc., after completing 11 months' of service in the estate. In order to have an idea about the extent of the benefit,

\* For definition of staff, see details on page 6.

data relating to the number of workers who enjoyed leave during the calendar year preceding the period of the Survey were collected and are presented in Statement 4.2.

### STATEMENT 4.2

#### PROPORTION OF WORKERS GRANTED EARNED LEAVE DURING 1961

Size	Estimated average daily number of workers employed in 1961	Estimated percentage of workers who enjoyed leave in 1961	Distribution of workers who enjoyed leave by period leave enjoyed (estimated percentages)						
			Up to 5 days	6 to 10 days	11 to 15 days	16 to 20 days	21 to 25 days	26 to 30 days	Over 30 days
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Large Estates	11,261	96.0	6.1	6.5	67.4	17.5	0.1	2.3	0.1
Small Estates	5,816	68.9	3.1	23.6	62.3	4.2	1.9	4.0	0.9
All Estates	17,077	86.8	5.3	11.1	66.0	13.9	0.6	2.8	0.8

The statistics show that a very high percentage (87) of workers enjoyed leave during 1961. Since there is an off season in the industry all except some essential employees are allowed to go home during this period. Since workers take leave each year and since there are normally 300 to 310 working days in a year, it is quite understandable that a high proportion of workers availed 11 to 15 days' leave. If the fact that the industry employs one-fourth of its working force on a casual basis is taken into account, it is evident that there is a high degree of compliance of the law in regard to earned leave.

4.4.2. *Sick Leave*—The rules framed by the State Governments under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, provide for the grant of sick leave with wages to the extent of 14 days in a year at the rate of two-thirds of the daily time-rated wages subject to a minimum of annas twelve (Re. 0.75) per day. The condition for the grant of sick leave with wages is that the sickness should be certified by the medical practitioner who has been appointed as the certifying surgeon by the estate. The Survey results show that 89 per cent. of the Rubber estates were complying with the above provision and granting sick leave to their workers. In fact the compliance was universal in the case of large estates and the defaulters were mainly some of the small estates. The main reason for non-compliance by these estates was that they had no permanent labour but were engaging casual workers as and when they required.

As in the case of earned leave, staff members enjoyed better facilities in the matter of sick leave also. They were allowed one month's leave on full basic pay, dearness allowance and servant allowance etc.

4·4·3. *Casual leave*—Though the figures given in Statement (4·1) indicate that 83 per cent. of the Rubber estates granted casual leave but the extent of benefit was not extensive as everywhere it was restricted only to staff members and excluded daily-rated workers who constituted the bulk of the working force. The Standing Orders prescribed by the UPASI for its member estates and adopted by the estates for their staff, provide for the grant of 7 days' casual leave in a year on full pay. In the course of the Survey it was found that all the large estates were following the Standing Orders in this regard. However, among small estates only 76·5 per cent. were found to be granting casual leave. Even among these there was no uniformity in regard to the number of days allowed and varied from 5 to 14. However, most of them allowed only 7 days in a year.

4·4·4. *National and Festival Holidays*—The State Governments of Kerala and Madras have passed a special law for the grant of national and festival holidays with pay to industrial workers, including plantation workers. Both the Acts provide for the grant of 7 holidays in a year of which 15th August and 26th January are compulsory. In Kerala, holiday on 1st May also is compulsory. Rest of the days are to be fixed by the Inspectors (appointed under the Act) in consultation with employers and workers. Wages for such holidays are payable to only those workers who had put in at least a month's service and the rate of payment prescribed is the average daily wage during the month preceding the holiday. The Survey results show that barring a very few small estates, which did not have any regular labour but engaged casual labour only, all other estates, large as well as small, were complying with the law.

4·4·5. *Weekly off*—The system of allowing the workers a day of rest in a week was widely prevalent in all the Rubber Plantations in the country. Since the law does not specifically provide for payment for such off days, the workers in the Industry, excepting those who were monthly-rated (i.e., staff), did not enjoy the 'off days' with pay.

## CHAPTER V

### WELFARE AND AMENITIES

Welfare activities undertaken by the employers and various amenities provided to the workers in plantations are generally those which the employers are under a statutory obligation to provide under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and the rules framed thereunder. Data collected during the Survey on the various welfare items are discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### 5.1. *Drinking Water*

The legal provision relating to this item requires every plantation to make effective arrangements to provide and maintain at convenient places in the plantation a sufficient supply of wholesome drinking water for all workers. The rules framed by the State Governments prescribe conditions regarding source of supply, storage of water, cleanliness, etc. It is estimated that at the time of the Survey only 50 per cent. of large and about 39 per cent. of small estates (nearly 42 per cent. of all estates) had made arrangements for the supply of drinking water at work-sites. Most of the managements appeared to be under the impression that drinking water facilities need be provided only near workers' houses and not at convenient places at work-sites. Generally it was found that the units had made arrangements for the supply of drinking water near the workers' lines only. This appears to be largely due to the fact that the Act mentions only 'convenient places' in every plantation and does not specify that drinking water facilities should be provided at work-places.

Except for 21 per cent. of large estates where water was supplied through pipes, everywhere else the arrangement was either in the form of tube wells or wells. Thus in the industry as a whole in only 7 per cent. of estates there were taps and in the rest there were tube wells or wells.

#### 5.2. *Canteens*

The rules framed under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 by the State Governments require every plantation wherein 150 or more workers are ordinarily employed to provide and maintain canteen or canteens with facilities for sale of coffee, tea and snacks to workers on a no-profit no-loss basis. In the matter of canteens, the actual practice that was noticed was that the employers did not run canteens themselves but encouraged establishment of tea shops by private persons within the limits of the estates. The managements did not have any control over the fixation of the price, etc. The findings of the Survey reveal that in the industry as a whole about 36 per cent. of the rubber estates were under a statutory obligation to provide canteens. Of these estates, only 24 per cent. had some arrangements for the canteens. In addition, about 9 per cent. of the estates which were not under Statutory Obligation to provide canteens, had canteen arrangements. In these cases, the canteens were 'tea shops' run by contractors or other private persons. In all these canteens, only tea and coffee were supplied. Only in stray cases meals were also being sold. The items sold were at market rates in all these canteens. Thus, it can be concluded on the basis of the data collected during the Survey



that provision of the Plantations Labour Act and rules framed thereunder relating to canteens is not being followed in most of the Rubber Plantations in the country.

### 5.3. *Creche*

Creches were almost non-existent in Rubber Plantations at the time of the Labour Investigation Committee. In view of high proportion of women in the industry the Committee recommended that provision of creche should be made compulsory for the estates. As a result of the recommendation of the Committee, a specific provision on the subject was incorporated in the Plantations Labour Act, 1951. Under the Act it is obligatory for all plantations, including rubber, which employ 50 or more women to provide and maintain suitable rooms for the use of children, below the age of six, of women workers. The rules framed by the State Governments under the Act prescribe the standards of creche and provide that children attending creches should be supplied milk, refreshments, clothes, soap, oil, etc.

The data collected during the Survey in respect of creches are presented in the following Statement :—

**STATEMENT 5.1**  
**CRECHE FACILITIES IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS IN 1961-62**

Size		No. of rubber estates	Estimated percentage of estates employing women	Percentage of estates	
				Which were under statutory obligation to provide creche facilities	Which had provided creche facilities
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Large Estates ..	..	38	100.0	79.0	50.0
Small Estates ..	..	98	85.0	18.1	..
All Estates ..	..	136	89.0	37.2	33.3

NOTE—Percentages in col. (5) relate to units mentioned in Col. 4.

It is estimated that two out of every three estates under obligation to provide creche were ignoring the law. None of the small estates covered had creches. The position was comparatively better among large estates. The general reasons aduced by the defaulting employers were that most of their women workers came from out-side the estate and therefore the need for a creche was not felt. In a few units, the managements said that plan, etc., for the construction of creches had been sent to the Chief Inspector of Plantations. Even where creches had been provided they did not fully meet the requirements of the law. Either the creche building was not of the prescribed standard or children were not supplied toys, clothes, etc. Considering the fact that work in plantations has to be done in open air, it is imperative that due attention is paid to this provision and proper maintenance of creche.

### 5.4. *Medical Facilities*

In 1944-45, when the Labour Investigation Committee conducted an enquiry in Plantations, the planters were under no obligation to provide medical

facilities to their employees. Consequently, there were generally no dispensaries in Rubber estates. However, the Committee reported that all the estates had some arrangements either with the doctor in the Government Hospital or some private practitioner to render medical attention to the estate labour. Since then elaborate statutory provision has been made for ensuring proper medical aid to plantation workers. The rules framed under the Plantations Labour Act require every plantation employing 1,000 or more workers to have, wherever possible, its own Garden Hospital or to have a lien on beds in such hospitals in neighbouring plantations or other hospital to the scale of 15 beds per 1,000 workers as may be approved by the Chief Inspector of Plantations. Those which choose the second alternative have the option to provide dispensary with up to 5 detention beds under the supervision of a qualified doctor assisted by such staff as may be prescribed by the Chief Inspector. If such a dispensary is maintained the management can reduce proportionately the number of beds on which they have a lien. Those plantations which employ less than 1,000 workers and are situated within reasonable distances from one another have the option to combine and provide joint hospitals/dispensaries and share their expenses. However, they have to submit full particulars of the type of arrangement they propose to make to the Chief Inspector and obtain his approval. The rules lay down that those estates which employ more than 200 workers and provide combined hospitals, wherever possible, run their own dispensary. In every estate where a hospital or dispensary is not situated the management is required to maintain a cup-board or first-aid box equipped with prescribed contents. The cup-board or first-aid box is to be kept in charge of a trained first-aider. The rules further provide that those small and inaccessible estates which employ 350 or less workers must have a dispensary, with detention beds of the prescribed number under the immediate care of a full-time qualified compounder but supervised and visited thrice a week by the nearest garden doctor.

Rules also prescribe the qualifications of Doctors, Nurses, etc., number of medical and auxiliary personnel to be appointed according to certain scales, number of beds, standards of the hospitals, equipments to be provided in the Group as well as Garden Hospitals, periodical visits by the District Medical Officers to such hospitals, standard of medical facilities, etc.

The findings of the Survey reveal that all the large establishments had provided either hospitals or dispensaries. The following Statement gives details :—

### STATEMENT 5-2

#### MEDICAL FACILITIES IN THE RUBBER PLANTATIONS 1961-62

Size			Number of estates	Percentage of estates providing dispensaries or hospitals	Percentage of estates providing	
					Only dispensaries	Only hospitals
(1)			(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Large Estates	..	..	38	100.0	71.0	29.0
Small Estates	..	..	98	7.1	7.1	..
All Estates	..	..	136	33.1	25.0	8.1

It would thus be seen from the figures that all large estates had either dispensaries or hospitals. The position, however, was not as good in small estates. Only about 7 per cent. had dispensaries, 69·4 per cent. did not have dispensaries of their own but had contracts with dispensaries or medical practitioners in the nearby areas and the rest had not made any arrangement at all. Thus, in the industry as a whole, in nearly 83 per cent. of the estates, medical facilities in one form or the other were available. There were no facilities at all in about 17 per cent. of the estates. These estates, as already stated above, were all small in size and the managements maintained that there were Government hospitals in the vicinity where workers could receive free treatment.

It may be mentioned that the Government of Kerala had appointed a medical advisory committee to evaluate the existing medical facilities and the report of the committee had not been submitted at the time of the Survey in 1961-62. In the State of Madras also, the question of fully implementing the Medical facilities was under the consideration of the State authorities at the time of the Survey. Thus, the position as revealed by the Survey is that provisions relating to medical facilities remain to be implemented in full.

#### **5.5. Recreational Facilities**

There is no specific mention about the existence of recreation facilities in Rubber Plantations in the report of the Labour Investigation Committee. Perhaps nothing worth a mention was being done by employers in this regard at that time. However, in recognition of somewhat peculiar nature of conditions of life and employment of persons engaged on plantations, the Plantations Labour Act made it obligatory for employers to provide recreation facilities and authorised State Governments to prescribe the standard of such facilities. In exercise of this power the rules framed by the Governments of Kerala and Madras lay down that every employer should provide and maintain as near workers' quarters as possible, (i) recreation centres with provision for indoor games suitable for adult and child workers and (ii) where adequate flat open space is available within a reasonable distance, a play ground or playgrounds for adult and child workers with necessary sports equipment for outdoor games.

The Survey shows that in the country as a whole 44 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations had provided some recreational or cultural facilities to their workers. The proportion of estates providing such facilities was fairly high (79%) in the case of large establishments but among smaller ones it was quite low (31%). Statement 5.3 which gives details of the nature of facilities provided, shows that they varied considerably.

The expenses of such activities were being met entirely by employers. It is estimated that in about 38 per cent. of the estates providing recreation facilities, all of whom were large plantations, a joint committee had been appointed to manage the activities. Elsewhere, they were managed directly by employers.

#### **5.6 Educational Facilities.**

The mere fact that plantations are generally located in remote areas, cut off from civic centres, heighten the importance of arrangements for educational

# STATEMENT 5.3

## Proportion of Rubber Plantations Providing Recreation Facilities 1961-62

Size	No. of estates	Estimated percentage of estates providing recreation facilities	Distribution of estates in col. (3) according to type of recreation facilities provided				
			Only indoor games	Only out door games	Indoor games as well as out door games; radio etc.	Newspapers and magazines only	Celebrations of religious functions
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Large Estates	38	78.9	10.5	10.5	57.9	..	..
Small Estates	98	30.6	..	8.2	..	14.3	8.1
All Estates	136	44.1	2.9	8.8	16.2	10.3	5.9

facilities. At the time the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry, the employers were not under any legal obligation to provide such facilities. Nevertheless, over one-fourth of the estates visited by the Committee were found to have made some sort of arrangements. With the enactment of the Plantations Labour Act it is now obligatory on all plantations, wherein workers' children between the ages of six and twelve exceed twenty-five, to make arrangements for the education of children free of charge. The rules framed by the Government of Kerala exempt plantations from providing a primary school if there is a school run by the State Government or by a local body within a distance of 2 miles. A similar provision exists in the rules framed by the Madras Government but the distance for purposes of exemption is limited to one mile. The Survey shows that all the plantations had complied with the law in the sense that educational facilities existed in almost all the plantations. In 86 per cent. of the plantations there were schools run by Government or local bodies in the vicinity and hence the need was being met by them. The rest (i.e., 14%), all of whom were large estates, were running primary schools. In 43 per cent. of these estates such articles as books, slates, etc., were also being supplied free by the managements.

#### 5.7. *Other Amenities*

None of the units surveyed reported the existence of grainshop or co-operative society/stores/credit society.

#### 5.8. *Protective Clothing*

Since workers in plantations have to work in open air, the law has made it obligatory for employers to supply free, once in every twelve months, either a 'Cumbli' (blanket) or a rain coat or umbrella or a hat of the quality approved by the Chief Inspector, for protection against rain or cold. Those plantations which are situated at a height of 2,500 feet or more are required to supply an extra blanket. In the course of the Survey it was found that in Kerala the general practice was to make a cash payment *in lieu* of the above items. This was on the basis of a mutual agreement between employers and workers and approved by the Chief Inspector of Plantations. There was no such agreement in Madras State and the Inspectorate insisted upon the supply of articles. The data collected during the Survey reveal that all the large estates in the country were paying Rs. 9.50 once a year *in lieu* of 'cumbli', etc. Among the small estates about 58 per cent. were making cash payment of Rs. 9.50 per worker and the rest were found to be supplying one blanket and an umbrella once a year. However, this concession was generally confined to permanent workers alone in large as well as small estates. Casual or temporary workers were being paid a cash allowance at the rate of Re. 0.03 per day worked by them.

#### 5.9. *Housing*

Due to the fact that plantations are generally located in remote areas and since most of the workers employed therein were, and to a certain extent are still being, brought from distant places, arrangements made for housing of plantation workers has always invited special attention. The Labour Investigation Committee had found that planters were providing free houses to all their employees except casual and local labour. However, in the absence

of any law regulating the housing conditions of plantation workers, the type of houses provided were found to vary from district to district and estate to estate. Since then elaborate regulations have now been framed on the subject and the Plantations Labour Act makes it obligatory on every employer to provide and maintain housing accommodation for every worker and his family residing in the plantations. With a view to avoiding imposition of sudden burden on the employers, the Rules framed under the Act require them to construct suitable accommodation for at least 8 per cent. of the resident workers every year until all such workers have been adequately housed. Before any house is constructed the employer must submit a housing scheme to the Chief Inspector of Plantations giving such details as specification of the period during which accommodation is proposed to be provided, the type and design of the houses and the plan as well as the site-plan of the buildings to be constructed. The Act empowers State Governments to constitute Tripartite Advisory Boards to advise the State Governments as regards standards and specifications of houses which may be approved and on other matters connected with the provisions of the Act and the Rules relating to housing. The standard accommodation prescribed in Kerala is that each house should have a living room (120 sq. ft.), a kitchen, and a *verandah* in front as well as rear. Specifications of foundation, basement, superstructure, doors, windows, ventilators, shelf, wood-work, roofing, flooring and finishing have been given in the housing scheme approved by the State Government. In Madras, the house should have one living room (120 sq. feet), one kitchen, inclusive of bath-cum-wash room, and a *verandah*.

Data relating to housing in Rubber Plantations collected in the course of the present Survey show that managements of about 89 per cent. of the estates had provided housing accommodation for their employees in 1961-62. All the large Rubber Plantations had provided housing accommodation to their workers. Among small estates only about 85 per cent. had provided houses to their workers and the rest had not provided any housing accommodation at all. These estates were very small and the reason put forth by the managements for not providing any housing facilities was that all their workers were local people who came to work every day from nearby villages where they had their own houses. Statement 5.4 shows the proportion of estates which provided housing accommodation in Rubber Plantations at the time of the Survey.

In the Industry as a whole, it is estimated that about 62 per cent. of the total workers employed had been housed by the managements. The percentage of workers housed was much higher (76.6%) in large estates than in small estates (36.2%). In terms of the proportion of workers housed also, the position was much better in large estates. While about 61 per cent. of the estates had provided housing accommodation to all their workers, the corresponding percentage for the small estates was only 8. In fact, as many as 61 per cent. of the small estates had provided accommodation only to less than 50 per cent. of their workers.

*Types of houses*—On the basis of the data collected, it is estimated that there were nearly 6,300 houses in the Rubber estates in 1961-62. The Statement (5.5) gives the classification of houses by the nature of their construction and the type of accommodation.

# PROPORTION OF RUBBER PLANTATIONS PROVIDING HOUSING ACCOMMODATION TO THEIR EMPLOYEES IN 1961-62

Size	Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates providing housing accommodation	Estimated percentage of estates providing housing accommodation to				Estimated total number of persons employed in the industry as on 31-10-61	Estimated percentage of workers (of Col. 8) who were housed by the management	
			All workers i.e., 100 per cent.	Majority of workers i.e., 50 to 99 per cent.	Few workers i.e., below 50 per cent.	None of the workers			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
1. Large Estates	..	38	100.0	60.5	29.0	10.5	..	12,224	78.6
2. Small Estates	..	98	84.7	8.2	15.3	61.2	15.3	6,930	36.2
3. All Estates	..	136	89.0	22.8	19.1	47.1	11.0	19,154	62.0

## STATEMENT 5.5

# CLASSIFICATION OF HOUSES PROVIDED TO WORKERS IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—1961-62

Size	Estimated number of houses provided	Percentage of houses according to						
		Nature of construction		Type of accommodation				
		Pucca	Kutcha	1 room	2 rooms	3 rooms	4 rooms and above	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
1. Large Estates	..	4,801	98.6	3.4	91.4	4.0	2.7	1.9
2. Small Estates	..	1,557	91.0	9.0	88.2	5.2	5.6	1.0
All Estates	..	6,358	95.3	4.7	90.6	4.3	3.5	1.6

It would be noticed from Statement (5.5) that except for less than 5 per cent. of the houses, the rest were *pucca* built. The statistics pertaining to proportions of houses according to rooms given related to living rooms, i.e., rooms other than kitchen, bath and *verandah*. About 91 per cent. of the houses in Rubber estates had only one room. Such houses were generally provided with one *verandah* and a kitchen, and a common bath room and latrines for each line of houses. One-room houses were invariably given to ordinary workers. Houses with two or more rooms were given only to members of staff whose number was not very large in any estate.

As mentioned earlier, the State Governments are required under the Plantations Labour Act, to prescribe the standard, etc., of the housing accommodation which the employers must provide to their resident labour. According to the information collected in the course of the Survey, the following are the estimated percentages of houses of the approved and unapproved standards in Rubber estates during 1961-62 :—

### STATEMENT 5.6

#### DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSES ACCORDING TO APPROVED/UNAPPROVED STANDARD

Size	Estimated percentage of houses which were of	
	Approved standard	Unapproved standard
(1)	(2)	(3)
Large Estates .. .. .	71.9	28.1
Small Estates .. .. .	63.0	37.0
All Estates .. .. .	69.7	30.3

The term 'approved standard' does not necessarily denote new types of constructions strictly in accordance with the norms prescribed by the State Governments. It includes many old houses which were considered to be 'substantially' in conformity with the standards laid down by the State Governments. It will be seen that about 70 per cent. of the houses provided by the employers of Rubber Plantations were of the approved standard. As normally expected, the proportion of houses was higher in large size Rubber estates. A better idea of the progress made so far in regard to the provision of houses of the approved standard in Rubber estates can be had from Statement (5.7), on the next page which gives the distribution of estates according to the percentage of houses of the approved standard provided by them.

*Assistance for Building Houses*—It is estimated that in 1961-62 only about 7 per cent. of the Rubber estates were giving some thatching material to their employees for building their own huts. These estates were all of small size located in the interior and had not built any houses for their workers. No other estate was giving any assistance, financial or otherwise to their employees to build their own houses.



# STATEMENT 5.7

## DISTRIBUTION OF ESTATES ACCORDING TO PROPORTION OF HOUSES OF APPROVED STANDARD IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—1961-62

Size	Number of estates	Percentage of estates not providing any houses	Estimated percentage of estates where proportion of houses of approved standard were											
			Nil	1 to 10	11 to 20	21 to 30	31 to 40	41 to 50	51 to 60	61 to 70	71 to 80	81 to 90	91 to 100	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	
Large Estates	..	..	10.6	10.5	..	..	..	..	..	10.5	..	10.5	57.9	
Small Estates	..	15.3	15.3	..	8.2	..	..	..	..	8.2	..	..	53.0	
All Estates	..	136	11.0	14.0	2.9	5.9	..	..	..	8.8	..	3.0	54.4	

## CHAPTER VI

### SOCIAL SECURITY

Apart from compensation in the case of accidents, workers employed in plantations enjoyed virtually no other social security when an enquiry was conducted by the Labour Investigation Committee. Since then either as a result of statutory measures or as a consequence of collective agreements the scope of social security enjoyed by workers in Rubber Plantations has widened considerably. The following paragraphs describe the position at the time of the Survey.

#### 6.1. *Provident Fund*

The Survey shows that in 1961-62 nearly 83 per cent. of the Rubber estates in the country had provident funds and on 31st October 1961 nearly 68 per cent. of the workers in the industry were members of these funds\*. In all the estates the schemes were introduced only after the application of the Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1952 to the Plantations in May 1957. The schemes existed in all large estates and it is estimated that on 31st October 1961 nearly 9,200 employees (or 75 per cent. of all employees in the estates) were members of the funds. Of the smaller estates only 76.5 per cent., it is estimated, had provident funds with a membership of approximately 3,800 employees, or 56 per cent. of all employees in these estates, on the above mentioned date. The estates which did not have any provident fund were mostly small plantations having no permanent labour force.

Since all the schemes were covered by the Employees' Provident Fund Act, their scope, conditions of eligibility, rate of contributions, etc., were the same as prescribed under the Act. The only departure was that whereas for workers the rate of contribution was 6½ per cent. as laid down under law†, in the case of staff members it was 8½ per cent. The enhanced rate in the case of the staff members was introduced from 1-12-1957 as a result of an agreement between the United Planters' Association of Southern India and the Estate Staff Unions of South India.

#### 6.2. *Pension*

No scheme of pension was reported to exist in any of the Rubber Plantations covered during the Survey.

---

\* Since then the percentage of workers who were members of provident funds has increased. According to the Statistics published by the Central Provident Fund Commissioner, on 30th September, 1964 the total number of subscribers was 13,761 or 78 per cent. of the total number of workers in Rubber Plantations.

† With effect from 1st February, 1965, the Statutory rate of provident fund contribution under the Employees' Provident Funds Act, 1952 has been enhanced to 8% of pay in respect of Rubber Plantations employing 50 or more persons.

### 6.3. *Gratuity*

There is no mention in the report of the Labour Investigation Committee about the existence of any system of paying gratuity in any of the Rubber estates at the time of their enquiry. The first scheme for payment of gratuity to workers in Rubber Plantations is found to have been introduced in 1956 as a result of an agreement reached between managements and workers of Rubber estates in the Malabar area (*i.e.*, former Palaghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore districts of Madras). In 1957 there was an agreement between the Estate Staff Union of South India and the United Planters' Association of Southern India as a result of which all members of staff of all member estates of the UPASI became entitled to gratuity. In Kerala also a regular gratuity scheme for workers was introduced in February 1962 on the basis of an agreement arrived at between the employers and workers. All these schemes were in force in Rubber Plantations at the time of the Survey. Consequently, it was found that all large estates and nearly 92 per cent. of small estates (or 94% of all estates in the country) had gratuity schemes covering staff members as well as workers. In all large estates gratuity was being paid both in the case of death and retirement. Among small estates though all the concerned estates paid gratuity in the case of retirement of workers, payment in the case of death was being made only by 85 per cent. Thus, of all the estates in the country, 89 per cent. paid gratuity in cases of death as well as retirement and an additional 5 per cent. paid gratuity in cases of retirement only. None of the estates paid any gratuity on resignation of employees or termination of service by the management.

The qualifying condition prescribed was 5 years' continuous service in the case of staff members and 10 years' continuous service in respect of workers. The rate of payment was half a month's basic salary\* for each completed year of service subject to a maximum of 15 months' basic salary in all cases †.

### 6.4. *Maternity Benefit*

At the time when the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their investigation, the Maternity Benefits legislation did not apply to the plantations in South India. Women workers employed in plantations, are now entitled to maternity benefits under the Maternity Benefit Acts of the State Governments *e.g.*, Kerala Maternity Benefit Act, 1957. The State Government of Madras have specified the benefits in the rules framed under the Plantations Labour Act. The benefits to a woman worker is spread over a period of 12 weeks. Under the Kerala Maternity Benefit Act, 1957, cash payment at the rate of Rs. 5.25 per week is payable for a period of 12 weeks spread over the period prior to the day of delivery and after. The data collected during the Survey indicate that in 72 per cent. of the estates claims for Maternity Benefits were made and paid by the employers.

---

\*In estates in the Malabar area the rate was 15 days' wages.

† In Kerala, the agreement arrived at between the parties in February 1962 fixed the maximum period as 12 months wage s for the workers.

The following Statement gives the details for the large and small estates;

### STATEMENT 6-1

#### PROPORTION OF RUBBER PLANTATIONS WHICH PAID MATERNITY BENEFITS 1961-62

Size	Number of Rubber estates	Estimated percentage of		Estimated number of claims made and paid
		Estates employing women	Units out of those in col.(3) in which claims for maternity benefits were made	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Large Estates .. ..	38	100.0	89.5	744
Small Estates .. ..	98	84.7	63.9	103
All Estates .. ..	133	89.0	71.9	847

#### 6.5. *Retrenchment Compensation*

The data collected during the course of the Survey reveal that there was no retrenchment reported in any of the units surveyed and consequently the question of compensation did not arise at the time of the Survey.

#### 6.6. *Occupational Disease*

None of the units surveyed reported any occupational disease.

#### 6.7. *Industrial Accidents*

Data collected during the Survey relating to accidents, show that in the industry as a whole accidents were reported in about 14 per cent. of Rubber Plantations in the country during the year 1961. The percentage of estates reporting accidents was 29 among large estates while it was only about 8 in case of small estates. Viewed from the number of persons involved in accidents, it is estimated that the rate of accidents was only about 4.4 per thousand of the total estimated average number of persons employed in the industry during the year, the corresponding rates of accident in large and small estates being 6.1 and 1.2 respectively. Ninety-one per cent. of the workers involved, suffered from temporary disability and the rest were incapacitated permanently. All temporary disability cases were reported from large estates whereas permanent disability cases were in small estates.

## CHAPTER VII

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

During the post war years, specially since the country gained independence, considerable attention has been paid to the promotion of industrial peace and the creation of favourable atmosphere for the growth of healthy labour-management relations. The activities of Government in this context have not been confined to mere enactment of laws for speedy settlements of disputes but have extended to creation of atmosphere for the maintenance of cordial relations between workers and employers and to the promotion of healthy trade unionism and direct negotiations. Some of the new developments in the field of labour-management relations in the industry since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry are the constitution of industrial committee on plantations, plantations advisory boards or committees in States and appointment of tripartite committees/board, for settling major issues, such as wages, bonus, etc. All these seem to have made substantial contribution towards promotion of industrial harmony. The following paragraphs briefly describe some of the aspects and facts of the industrial relations in the industry.

#### 7.1. *Industrial Disputes*

Separate statistics relating to industrial disputes are available for the Rubber Plantations in the country only since 1959 and they are given below.

**STATEMENT 7.1**  
**INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS 1959-62.**

Year					No. of disputes	No. of workers involved	No. of man-days lost
(1)					(2)	(3)	(4)
1959	..	..	..	..	12	1,377	22,411
1960	..	..	..	..	12	5,079	22,971
1961	..	..	..	..	28	6,012	77,126
1962	..	..	..	..	9	1,586	12,953

It will be noticed that the time loss during 1961 was very considerable. The main reason for a loss of nearly seventy seven thousand man-days was due to the fact that there was a total strike in 4 estates in Kerala on a dispute relating to the reinstatement of dismissed workers of these estates. The strike lasted for 18 days and accounted for about 90 per cent. of the total man-days lost in the industry during 1961.

#### 7.2. *Trade Unions*

The most remarkable change which has taken place since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry is in the sphere of unionisation among Rubber Plantation workers. The Committee had reported that there was no organisation of any kind worth the name among the large mass of plantation workers in 1944-45 and that they did not find any trade union

in any of the estates covered by them. As against such a situation, in 1961-62, it was found that trade unions existed in nearly 83 per cent. of Rubber Plantations and about 66 per cent. of workers were members of these unions. The details are given in the following Statement:—

### STATEMENT 7.2

#### EXTENT OF TRADE UNIONISM IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—1961-62

Size	No. of estates	Estimated percentage of estates where workers organised themselves into unions	Estimated percentage of workers who were members of unions	Percentage of units where unions were recognised
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Large Estates .. ..	38	100.0	71.5	89.5
Small Estates .. ..	98	76.5	57.8	90.7
All Estates .. ..	136	83.1	66.5	90.3

The growth of trade unionism apparently has not been entirely on healthy lines as there was a problem of multiplicity of unions. It is estimated that of the estates where unions were functioning, in about 54 per cent. there was only one union. In the rest there were two or more unions. The following Statement gives detailed information. It would be noticed that multiplicity of unions was more among large than small ones.

### STATEMENT 7.3

#### DISTRIBUTION OF RUBBER PLANTATIONS ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF TRADE UNIONS—1961-62

Size	Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates which had unions	Estimated percentage distribution of estates having unions according to number of unions		
			One union	Two unions	Three or more unions
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Large Estates	38	100.0	21.0	39.5	39.5
Small Estates	98	76.5	70.7	20.0	9.3
All Estates	136	83.1	54.0	26.5	19.5

Information collected in the course of the Survey shows that the main activity of trade unions at the time of the Survey was securing of claims under various Labour Acts such as Plantations Labour Act, Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Payment of Wages Act, 1948, Industrial Disputes Act, etc. None of the unions had paid any attention towards welfare activities.

### 7.3. *Agreements*

One of the significant features in the field of labour-management relations in Rubber Plantations Industry is the large number of agreements concluded between the employers and workers, either as a result of direct negotiations or as a result of intervention of Conciliation Officers, Labour Commissioners or other State officials. The agreements have generally been common for several units of the industry. The agreements concluded between the employers and workers in the State of Kerala and Madras since 1956 covered a wide field of subjects such as wage revision of workers and staff, bonus for the different years and gratuity. These agreements were instrumental in bringing about not only uniformity in conditions of service of workers in various areas but also in promoting industrial peace. Details relating to these agreements, have already been discussed at the relevant places in the report.

### 7.4. *Standing Orders*

As in the case of factories, the provision of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 has been made applicable to all plantations employing 100 or more workers. It is estimated that in the industry as a whole, nearly 39 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations were under a statutory obligation to frame standing orders and all of them had done so. In addition, about 33 per cent. of the Rubber estates, which were all in the small size group, had also framed standing orders voluntarily. Thus, at the time of the Survey all large and 61 per cent. of small estates or 72 per cent. of all estates had framed standing orders covering workers and staff. The United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI) has framed model standing orders one for the staff members and the other for workers and the estates having standing orders had adopted them.

### 7.5. *Welfare Officers*

The Plantations Labour Act, 1951 lays down that every plantation wherein 300 or more workers are ordinarily employed, should employ such number of welfare officers as may be prescribed. The Act also authorises the State Governments to prescribe the duties, qualifications and conditions of service of officers employed as welfare officers. Till the time of the Survey, neither the Government of Kerala nor Madras had framed any rules on the subject. It was found that none of the estates covered in the course of the Survey had appointed any such officer.

### 7.6. *Works Committees*

The formation of a works committee is a statutory obligation for estates employing 100 or more workers. The results of the Survey indicate that only about 15 per cent. of the total estates which were under a statutory obligation to have works committees had constituted such committees. The following Statement gives the details.

## STATEMENT 7.3

## WORKS COMMITTEES IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS —1961-62

Size					No. of estates	Estimated percentage of rubber estates which were under statutory obligation to constitute works committees	Estimated percentage of estates which had actually constituted works committees
(1)					(2)	(3)	(4)
Large Estates .. .. .	..	..	..	..	38	100.0	..
Small Estates .. .. .	..	..	..	..	98	15.3	53.3
All Estates .. .. .	..	..	..	..	136	39.0	15.1

Even though all the estates in the large size group were employing more than 100 workers and consequently were under a statutory obligation to constitute works committees, not a single unit in that group had constituted any such committee. Surprisingly all the committees which had been constituted were only in small estates. The main reasons given for the non-formation of committees by the managements of those estates which had not constituted such committees were (i) that no necessity was felt for such a committee by them, (ii) that they had not been pressed by the State authorities to constitute such committees, (iii) labour leaders did not co-operate with the managements, and (iv) important issues were being discussed between the associations of employers and unions and as such the committee was not necessary.

#### 7.7. Other Committees

No other committees such as production committees, safety committees etc., were found to exist in any of the estates covered during the Survey and none had associated workers with the management of the estate.

#### 7.8. Grievance Procedure

The prescribed procedure of the redress of grievances of workers in various estates was uniform and was incorporated in the standing orders. These standing orders provide that "All complaints arising out of employment including those relating to unfair treatment or wrongful exaction on the part of the superintendent/Manager or his Agent shall be submitted to the Superintendent/Manager or to such other person as may be specified in this behalf in the first instance with a right of appeal to the owners of the estate or to the Managing Agents of the Company where such exist". The Standing Orders further provide that decision of the Superintendent/Manager would be final but an appeal could be preferred to the Managing Agents of the Company, wherever such exist without prejudice to any right of the aggrieved worker to resort to legal proceedings in a court of law. In actual practice, however, the procedure adopted differed from unit to unit whether having a standing order or not. Oral complaints were first taken to the Supervisor who usually settled them. Complaints were rarely taken to the Manager/Superintendent or owner of the



estate, but whenever they were taken, their decision was final. No time limit was fixed for decision at any level or for appeal. Since workers have organised themselves into unions, union leaders take up important issues directly with the managements or their associations.

#### **7.9. *Plantation Labour Committees/Advisory Boards***

In the matter of industrial relations, the setting up of Plantation Labour Advisory Boards/Committees in different States is a significant development in the Plantations Industry in the country. These Committees/Boards are tripartite in character consisting of representatives of employers, workers and the Government. Usually, the Labour Commissioners of the States convene the meetings. Even though the functions of these bodies are advisory in character, their deliberations have had considerable impact on the implementations of the Plantations Labour Act. In fact they have been the main forum for discussing and prescribing the standards of various welfare facilities, specially housing and medical aid, to be provided by estates of different types. They have even helped in settling various important issues like wages, bonus and gratuity and have thus helped considerably in promoting not only welfare of workers but also industrial peace

## CHAPTER VIII

### LABOUR COST

Information pertaining to labour cost was collected, during the course of the Survey, in respect of employees covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, and whose wages do not exceed Rs. 300\* per month. The enquiry pertaining to labour cost was modelled on the lines of the study of labour cost in the European Industry, made by the International Labour Office in 1956, with such modifications as were considered necessary in the light of conditions in India. For instance, in view of the fact that in India wages are paid on the basis of 'days' instead of 'hours' as in European countries, the data were collected for the man-days and not man-hours. Similarly it was found in the course of the pilot enquiry that most of the industrial establishments did not maintain any separate records of premium payments made for leave or holidays or payments for days not worked and hence these were dropped as separate items and included under 'basic wages'. Certain additions were made in the list either on the basis of the decisions of the Study Group, referred to above, or with a view to eliciting separate information on some of the items on which employers have to incur expenses under labour laws in force in the country, e.g., lay off, retrenchment, etc.

In order to ensure uniformity and maintain comparability of the data, the field staff were asked to collect information, as far as possible, for the year ending with 31st October, 1961 which was the specified date fixed for the enquiry. However, in view of the fact that financial years of the establishments do not coincide with the year ending with the specified date of the Survey and also differ from unit to unit and from area to area, the field staff were instructed that wherever it was difficult to cull out the information for the above period, they should collect data for the latest period of 12 months for which information was available subject to the condition that the data so collected should, as far as practicable, cover a major part of the twelve months ending on the specified date. The data available show that by and large it was possible to collect information for the year ending with October, 1961.

It may be mentioned here that with a view to forming a better estimate of labour cost, salaries and allowances, etc., of those persons who were engaged in connection with any welfare item, amenity, etc., even though they were covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and were receiving wages not exceeding Rs. 300 per month, were not included in the general head "wages". Similarly, the mandays of such persons were excluded from the general head "man-days worked". Expenses incurred in connection with such persons were recorded against the item for which they were engaged.

---

\*In case of factory industries, data on labour cost were collected in respect of employees getting less than Rs. 400. This was in pursuance of the decision taken by the Study Group on Wage Cost appointed by the Ministry of Labour and employment in 1959. Since Plantations Labour Act, 1951 does not apply to employees whose monthly wages exceed Rs. 300 data on labour cost also were restricted to only those who are covered by the Act and getting wages not exceeding Rs. 300 p.m.

### 8.1. Labour Cost Per Man-day Worked

The estimated labour cost per man-day worked in the country as a whole worked out to Rs. 2.87 in the Rubber Plantations during 1961. The following Statement gives the details:—

#### STATEMENT 8.1

#### ESTIMATED LABOUR COST PER MAN-DAY WORKED IN RUBBER PLANTATIONS—1961

						(In Rupees)	
Size						Estimated number of man-days worked in '000'	Labour cost per man-day worked
(1)						(2)	(3)
Large Estates						3,030	2.90
Small Estates						1,422	2.79
All Estates						4,452	2.87

### 8.2. Components of Labour Cost

A break-up of the labour cost per man-day worked according to components is given in the following Statement :

#### STATEMENT 8.2

#### LABOUR COST PER MAN-DAY WORKED BY THEIR COMPONENTS—1961

								(In Rupees)	
Size	Wages including leave and holiday wages and incentive bonus	Premium pay for overtime and late shifts	Bonuses	Other cash payments	Payments in kind	Social Security contributions			
						Obligatory	Non-obligatory		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)		
Large Estates	2.14	*	0.16	0.09	*	0.18	0.05		
	(73.79)		(5.52)	(3.10)		(6.21)	(1.72)		
Small Estates	2.14	*	0.13	0.11	*	0.14	0.05		
	(76.70)		(4.66)	(3.94)		(5.02)	(1.79)		
All Estates	2.14	*	0.15	0.10	*	0.17	0.05		
	(74.57)		(5.23)	(3.48)		(5.92)	(1.74)		
Size	Subsidies	Welfare centres Non-obligatory	Direct benefits	Other payments related to labour cost	Any others (Protective equipment)	Total			
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)			
Large Estates	0.25	..	*	*	0.03	2.90			
	(8.62)				(1.04)	(100.00)			
Small Estates	0.19	..	*	*	0.03	2.79			
	(6.81)				(1.08)	(100.00)			
All Estates	0.23	..	*	*	0.03	2.87			
	(8.01)				(1.05)	(100.00)			

\* Indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0.005.

8·2·1. *Wages*—This component comprised basic wages, dearness allowance, incentive and production bonus. Since payments made for leave and holidays were not separately maintained in some units, the amount of 'wages' included sums paid for the days worked as well as the days not worked but paid.

It is evident from Statement (8·2) that wages accounted for about 74·6 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked, there being practically no difference in this respect between large and small estates. The following Statement (8·3) gives the break-up of wages cost by sub-components.

**STATEMENT 8·3**  
**BREAK-UP OF WAGES COST BY SUB-COMPONENTS**

					(In Rupees)		
Size					Basic wages and dearness allowance	Incentive bonus (for extra tapping)	Total
(1)					(2)	(3)	(4)
Large Estates	..	..	..	..	2·00	0·14	2·14
					(93·5)	(6·5)	
Small Estates	..	..	..	..	2·00	0·14	2·14
					(93·5)	(6·5)	
All Estates	..	..	..	..	2·00	0·14	2·14
					(93·5)	(6·5)	

Wages and dearness allowance including leave and holiday wages accounted for 93·5 per cent. of the total wage cost. It would be noticed that the share of this element is almost the same in both large and small estates, the main reason being that there was standardisation of minimum wages in the Rubber Plantations. Although incentive bonus (for extra tapping) is given only to one category of workers, viz., tappers, even then this item accounted for 6·5 per cent. of over-all wage cost per man-day thereby indicating its importance.

8·2·2. *Premium for overtime*—In plantations overtime was very rarely done and hence this item was not found to be significant.

8·2·3. *Bonuses*—Since none of the estates had any profit-sharing schemes or was paying any festival bonus, the entire payment under this head related to year-end bonus. Payments made as bonus accounted for 5·2 per cent. of the total labour cost in the industry as a whole. The share of this component was higher in large estates as compared to small estates (4·6%) mainly because whereas all large estates were found to be paying year-end bonus, among small estates a few did not.

8·2·4. *Other Cash Payments*—This sub-group accounted for 3·5 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day. The main items included in this group were (1) Servant Allowance for the staff members, (2) Travelling Allowance, i.e., way expenses for the workers and staff to go to their native places and back to estates and (3) *Kangani* commission. In the case of small estates the cost per man-day on this sub-group was slightly more than that for the large estates, the main reason for this is that some of the estates were paying certain special allowances such as Food Concession allowances, Meals allowances and House rent allowances, which were not being paid in other estates.

8.2.5. *Payment in Kind*—Expenses on this item were negligible. The system of payment in kind was not generally in vogue, but in a few mixed estates which had Tea as well as Rubber it was noticed that free tea was supplied to some of the staff members. However, since this practice was existing only in a few units, the expenditure was found to be negligible in the industry as a whole.

8.2.6. *Social Security*—Expenses incurred by employers under this group were recorded separately under two sub-groups, viz. (a) Obligatory and (b) Non-obligatory. Expenses incurred in connection with obligatory social security were those which the employers were required to pay in compliance to certain labour laws or awards, etc. Non-obligatory social security payments recorded were those which the managements paid to their workers as a result of any agreement between workers and employers, but without any legal compulsion (e.g., gratuity, pension, etc.). Statement (8.4) gives the break-up.

Items included under the sub-group 'Obligatory' together accounted for 5.9 per cent. and the sub-group 'Non-Obligatory' accounted for 1.7 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked. Of the total expenses incurred on 'Obligatory' social security measures, provident fund was the most important item accounting for 61.7 per cent. of the total. The other items in the order of their importance were payments made for sick leave, lay-off compensation, and maternity benefits. Non-obligatory expenses related to gratuity.

8.2.7. *Subsidies*—Under this head, data were collected in respect of expenditure incurred by employers on providing various types of facilities to workers and other members of their families. The facilities listed were: Medical and Health care, Canteens, Restaurants and Other Food Services, Company Housing, Building Fund, Credit Unions and Other Financial Aid Services, Creches, Educational Services, Cultural Services (e.g., Library, Reading Rooms, etc.), Recreational Services (Clubs, Sports, Theatres, Cinema, etc.), Transport, Sanitation (at work places only), Drinking Water Facilities, Vacation Homes, etc. The amounts recorded were net payments by the employers, including depreciation but excluding capital expenditure. In the course of the pilot Survey, it was found that in most of the cases the employers did not maintain any records separately for the above-mentioned items or expenses related not only to the persons falling within the scope of the Study but to others as well. Consequently the field staff was asked to obtain estimates from employers wherever separate statistics were not available. In case any expenses were incurred on workers covered by the Study as well as other employees, the amount was estimated for workers covered by the Study on the basis of the proportion they formed to the total employees concerned. It was a common practice in Rubber estates, which had attached factories to have combined expenses for the entire working force even though workers in the factories were covered under the Factories Act and not under the Plantations Labour Act.

Similarly, there were a few estates which were having mixed crops (e.g. Rubber estate having Tea) where managements kept common records for the expenses incurred on the various items such as medical expenses, educational services, etc., coming under this group, 'Subsidies'. In all such cases, the

# STATEMENT 8.4

## COST OF SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS PER MAN DAY WORKED—1961

(In Rupees

Size	Provident fund	Retrenchment compensation	Lay off	Employees' State Insurance Contributions	Compensation for Employment injury	Occupational disease	Maternity benefit	Sickness benefit	Others	Total	Non-obligatory	Total for obligatory and non-obligatory	Percentage of social security to total labour cost per man-day
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Large Estates	0.11 (61.11)	..	0.02 (11.11)	..	*	..	0.02 (11.11)	0.03 (16.67)	..	0.18 (100.00)	0.05	0.23	7.93
Small Estates	0.11 (73.57)	..	*	..	*	..	*	0.03 (21.43)	..	0.14 (100.00)	0.05	0.19	81
All Estates	0.11 (64.71)	..	0.02 (11.76)	..	*	..	0.01 (5.88)	0.03 (17.65)	..	0.17 (100.00)	0.05	0.22	7.66

\* indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0.005.

# STATEMENT 8.5

## COST OF SUBSIDIES PER MAN-DAY—1961

(In Rupees)														
Size	Medical and health care	Can- teens	Restau- rants and other food services	Company housing	Creches	Educational services	Cul- tural services	Recre- ational services	Trans- port	Sani- tation (at work places)	Drink- ing water	Building- fund and credit unions and other aid services	Total Percentage of cost on subsidies to total labour cost	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Large Estates	0.10 (40.00)	*	..	0.13 (52.00)	0.01 (4.00)	0.01 (4.00)	*	*	..	*	..	..	0.25 (100.00)	8.62
Small Estates	0.08 (42.11)	*	..	0.11 (57.89)	*	*	*	*	..	*	*	..	0.19 (100.00)	6.81
All Estates	0.09 (39.13)	*	..	0.12 (52.17)	0.01 (4.35)	0.01 (4.35)	*	*	..	*	*	..	0.23 (100.00)	8.01

\* indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0.005.

expenditure was estimated on the basis of the proportion of the employment for the particular crop to the total employment for the estate as a whole. Statement (8·5) gives the cost of subsidies per man-day worked in Rubber Plantations.

It will be seen from Statement (8·5) that the main items of expenditure under the 'subsidies' group were Housing and Medical and Health Care and together accounted for 91·3 per cent. of the total cost under this group. In view of the fact that provision of Medical and Housing facilities is a statutory obligation on the employers the importance of these items needs no elucidation.

8·2·8. *Other Payments Related to Labour Cost*—Under the group expenses incurred by the employers on such items as cost of recruitment, Vocational training, Recruitment Examinations, etc., apprenticeship and training facilities and on the 'job medical services' (e.g., first aid equipment, ambulance rooms) were included. The findings of the Survey reveal that expenses on the group accounted for an insignificant proportion to the total labour cost.

8·2·9. *Any Others (Protective Equipment)*—Since supply of protective equipments (e.g., *cumbli* or blankets, rain coats or umbrellas) is a statutory obligation for the employers, data on the expenditure incurred on account of this item were collected separately. The findings of the Survey reveal that the expenditure on protective equipments accounted for Re. 0·03 or 1·05 per cent. of the total labour cost.



## CHAPTER IX

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The Rubber Plantations Industry is concentrated only in South India and the State of Kerala has almost monopoly of rubber cultivation accounting for as much as about 94 per cent. of the total acreage under rubber. Another noticeable feature of the industry is that nearly 99 per cent. of plantations are small holdings not exceeding 50 acres and such holdings account for roughly 60 per cent. of the acreage under rubber. Since the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 applies to those plantations which admeasure 25 acres or more and in which 30 or more workers are employed, quite a large number of Rubber Plantations are still unregulated.

Judged from the number of persons employed, the Rubber Plantations Industry is the third major plantations industry of the country next only to Tea and Coffee. It is estimated that on 31st October, 1961 the total number of persons employed in Rubber Plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 was 19,339. Of these, about 95 per cent. were 'Production and Related Workers'. Persons falling in other groups constituted a very small percentage of the total.

The composition of the working force continues to indicate the initial system of recruitment when planters provided employment to families. Consequently, the working force even now comprises men, women and children. As at the time of the enquiry of the Labour Investigation Committee, men continued to predominate. However, there has been a change in the proportion of women and children. Unlike the declining trend of women in many industries, in Rubber Plantations there has been a slight increase in the percentage of women. It is estimated that women constituted 29.5 per cent. of the working force in October 1961, as against 24 per cent. in 1944. Another significant feature noticed was the decline in the number of adolescents and children.

Both the systems of payment i.e., time as well as piece rates are prevalent in the Rubber Plantations. About 51 per cent. of the total estimated number of production workers were time-rated and the rest (49 per cent.) were piece-rated. The system of employing workers through contractors for regular work of plantations or of *badli* labour was not in vogue in Rubber Plantations. On the basis of information collected regarding employment status it is estimated that of the total number of production workers, about 71 per cent. were permanent, about 4 per cent. temporary and the remaining (25 per cent). Casual labour. About 32 per cent. of production workers had a service of less than one year and about 61 per cent. were in the service group '5 or more years'.

The rate of accession and separations in the industry was not high being of the order of nearly one per cent. Information given by the managements indicates that 'Quits' were the main cause of separation accounting for about 77 per cent. of the total separations. The rate of absenteeism was about 20 per cent. in the industry as a whole.

The *Kangani* system of recruitment of workers, which was prevalent in the industry since times immemorial and which was severely criticised by the Labour Investigation Committee, has now been totally abolished. At the time

of the present Survey the recruitment was being done directly by the managements. *Kanganyies* who were in service have been either absorbed as Labour Supervisors or dispensed with after paying compensation on the basis of agreements arrived at between individual employers and *Kanganyies*.

There has been a significant upward movement of wages since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry. In 1944, the daily rates of wages of men, women and children in the industry were Re. 0.37, Re. 0.31 and Re. 0.25 respectively, whereas in 1961, the corresponding time rates in Rubber Plantations in Kerala (which accounts for 94 per cent. of the area under cultivation) were Rs. 1.72 for men, Rs. 1.31 for women (other than tappers), Rs. 1.50 (women tappers), Rs. 1.06 for adolescents and Re. 0.85 for children. Since 1952, the wage structure is regulated by the Minimum Wages Act. On the basis of the statistics collected, it is estimated that the average daily earnings of "all workers" in Rubber Plantations were Rs. 2.27 in October, 1961. The earnings of production workers were Rs. 2.18 a day. Men, women, adolescents and children earned on an average Rs. 2.43, Rs. 1.64, Rs. 1.13 and Re. 0.79 per day respectively. The lowest paid worker earned on an average Rs. 1.53 a day. Men lowest paid workers invariably earned more than the women workers. Clerical staff on an average earned Rs. 7.58 a day while employees in the 'watch and ward and other services' group earned Rs. 1.90 a day.

Information relating to components of earnings of all workers indicate that basic earnings accounted for Rs. 1.92 or nearly 85 per cent. of the total daily earnings (i.e., Rs. 2.27). The next important item was production bonus constituting about 11 per cent. and the rest (3.5 per cent.) is accounted for by other cash allowances such as servant allowance, *Kangani* commission, *cumbli* allowance and food grain concession allowances, etc. The system of paying dearness allowance as a separate component was in vogue in the industry but this was confined to only monthly-rated staff members. Workers received only consolidated wages.

The Survey shows that there was a wide-spread practice of paying way expenses to workers as well as staff once in a year for going to their native place on earned leave.

None of the estates surveyed had any scheme of profit-sharing bonus. However, the system of paying annual bonus was in vogue in about 95 per cent. of Rubber Plantations. The rate of bonus for the workers other than staff was based on agreements between employers and workers and it varied from year to year, but generally ranged from 4 to 10 per cent. of the basic earnings of workers. Staff members were paid bonus ranging from 1 to 4 months' basic pay at the discretion of the managements.

The usual system of settlement of wages was once in a month for 78 per cent. of the workers employed in the industry; it was once a week for 18 per cent. and the rest received wages once in 10 days or daily. No fines were found to be imposed in the plantations. Deductions, wherever made, were only those which have been authorised under the Payment of Wages Act, 1946.

At the time of the Survey the hours of work for adults in Rubber Plantations were 8 per day or 48 per week. Adolescents in large estates were allowed to work only for 40 hours but in the case of a few small estates, adolescents as well as

children were required to work for the same hours as adults. The spreadover of the daily hours of work was generally 9 hours including the rest interval of 1 hour. Generally, there was 'task system' in Rubber Plantations and any worker who completed his day's work was free to go home irrespective of the fact whether the working hours were over or not.

It was found that sanitary arrangements at work places existed in about 14 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations.

Workers at the time of the present Survey enjoyed statutory benefit of annual leave and sick leave under the Plantations Labour Act and festival holidays under Madras and Kerala Acts. Nearly 94 per cent. of Rubber estates were found to be granting annual leave and about 87 per cent. of workers enjoyed the benefit in 1961. The estimated percentage of estates granting sick leave and festival holidays was 89 and 94 respectively. Staff members enjoyed better leave privileges and in fact they alone were entitled to casual leave.

The Plantations Labour Act makes it obligatory for managements to provide certain Welfare measures and in fact the range of matters covered by it is much wider than those of the factory or mining legislation. Drinking water facility is one of the basic amenity covered by the law, but presumably due to ambiguity in the wordings of the rules framed by State Governments under the Act, majority of the estates were not found to have made such arrangements at work places. In view of large number of women employed in the industry, and since work has to be done in open air creche facility can also be termed as a basic amenity. However, the Survey results show that not much attention has been paid by managements towards it. It is estimated that nearly 37 per cent. of Rubber Plantations were obliged to provide creche and only about one-third of them had done so. Even where creches had been provided, they did not conform to the prescribed standard. The position in regard to compliance of the law concerning canteens also was not very happy. Only about one-fourth of those estates which were legally required to provide canteens had showed deference to the law. However, all the canteens were run by contractors or private individuals and were no better than tea or coffee stalls.

So far as medical facilities are concerned, there seems to be a definite improvement. Nearly one-third of the estates had dispensaries or hospitals at the time of the Survey and 50 per cent. had made arrangements with doctors in the nearby areas. Thus, only about 17 per cent. had not made any arrangements. All these defaulting estates were small establishments.

All Rubber Plantations had facilities for the education of workers' children and nearly half of them had some or the other arrangement for recreation of their employees.

The Survey results show that, in 1961-62, about 89 per cent. of Rubber Plantations had provided housing accommodation and nearly 62 per cent. of workers in the industry were thus housed. The defaulters were all small estates. Of the houses provided by employers approximately 70 per cent. were of the approved standard.

Workers were found to be enjoying not only protection in case of accidents but also benefits of provident fund, gratuity and maternity benefits in case of women. On the basis of the data collected during the Survey it is estimated

that the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme was in force in about 83 per cent. of the estates covering nearly 68 per cent. of the total workers employed in the industry.

As a result of collective agreements workers of nearly 94 per cent. of estates were entitled to gratuity in the event of retirement and/or death. The rules framed by the State Governments under the Plantations Labour Act have made it obligatory for planters to pay maternity leave and cash benefits to their women workers.

There have been quite significant developments in the field of industrial relations since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted the enquiry. The most remarkable change has been in the sphere of trade union movement in the industry. Whereas the Committee had found that trade unions were totally absent among plantation labour at that time, the present Survey results show that in 1961-62 trade unions existed in nearly 83 per cent. of the Rubber Plantations and about 66 per cent. of the workers employed in the industry were unionised. Apart from securing claims under the various labour laws, there was practically no other activity of trade unions.

Another healthy feature in the field of labour-management relations in the industry is the growth of collective bargaining and agreements. The agreements concluded have covered a wide field of subjects such as wages, bonus and gratuity.

Nearly 39 per cent. of the units were under statutory obligation to frame Standing Orders and all of them had done so. In addition, about 33 per cent. of the units, though not under statutory obligation had also framed Standing Orders for the workers and staff members. None of the sampled units had appointed any Labour Welfare Officer at the time of the Survey.

The Survey results show that about 39 per cent. of Rubber Plantations were under obligation to constitute Works Committees but only 15 per cent. of these had constituted them.

The Standing Orders framed by the units prescribe the procedure to be adopted for settling grievances of workers. In actual practice, the procedure adopted in all the units was that oral complaints were first taken to the supervisor who usually settled them. In rare cases workers approached the Superintendents/Managers or owners of the estates when not satisfied with decisions of the Supervisors. No time limit was fixed for disposal of the grievances or for appeal.

The Plantations Advisory Boards or Committees set up in various States to advise the State Governments in the matter of certain welfare facilities such as housing, medical care, etc., were found to be playing an important role in the matter of promoting not only welfare of the workers but also industrial peace.

Data pertaining to labour cost collected in respect of workers receiving Rs. 300 or less p.m. show that in 1961 the cost per man-day in the industry was Rs. 2.87. Of this sum, "wages" element (*i.e.*, consolidated wages or basic wage and dearness allowance and incentive or production bonus) alone accounted for about 74.57 per cent; other important items in the order of their importance were subsidies (8.01 per cent.), Social Security (7.66 per cent.), Bonus (5.23 per cent.), other cash payments (3.48 per cent.) and protective equipment (1.05 per cent.).

## APPENDIX I

## A BRIEF NOTE ON THE SAMPLE DESIGN AND THE METHOD OF ESTIMATION ADOPTED

1. *Sample Design*

For the Survey of Labour Conditions, a stratified sampling design with industry as a stratum, with further regional strata for those industries which were found to be highly concentrated in particular regions or areas, was followed. The registered factories/plantations belonging to those industries for which regional stratification was found necessary were stratified and each centre or area of high concentration was taken as a separate regional stratum of the industry and the remaining scattered units were clubbed together into a single residual stratum. Units in each industry/regional stratum were divided into two size-groups i.e., upper and lower. The cut-off point used for the classification of units into two size-groups in the case of Rubber Plantations was 194. This was arrived at on the basis of the average employment of Rubber estates in the country as a whole. However, in the case of this industry there was no regional stratification and sample units were selected from the all-India list.

In regard to sample size, it was thought that a sample of 25 per cent. from upper size group and 12½ per cent. from the lower size-group would yield reasonably reliable results. However, the experience of earlier surveys had shown that in view of non-availability of up-to-date frames, quite a large number of sampled establishments were found to have ceased functioning or to have changed the line of production when they were visited. In order to safeguard against undue shrinkage of the sample size due to such contingencies, it was decided to enlarge the sample size suitably in the light of the experience of the Wage Census conducted by the Bureau and on the basis of a study of closures of establishments in the past few years as revealed from the annual list of registered factories. However, in the case of Rubber Plantations, a study of closures of units was not possible because lists of plantations for the previous years were not available. Moreover, the experience of the Wage Census indicated that there was practically no death reported in the case of Rubber Plantations. Hence, the sample size was not enlarged. However, a provision was made that in case any sampled unit was found to be closed or had changed line of production (e.g., from Rubber to Tea) that unit may be substituted by its succeeding unit in the frame.

The ultimate sampling units, namely registered factories/plantations within an industry/regional stratum were arranged by contiguous States and within each State by contiguous districts in a serpentine fashion so that districts formed a continuous chain from one State to another. Having arranged the list of units in the above manner, Rubber Plantations employing more than 194 were taken in the upper-size class and the rest in the lower-size class. From these size-groups, the required number of units were selected by systematic sampling with a random start. The frame on the basis of which the sample was selected in the case of Rubber Plantations was the list of Plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 for the year 1960.

## 2. Method of Estimation

In the course of this Survey, various characteristics were studied, some of which were correlated with employment whereas there were others which were not so correlated. Consequently, slightly different methods were used for working out estimates for these two cases. For estimating the totals of those characteristics which are highly correlated with employment such as absenteeism, labour turnover, earnings, labour cost, ratio of total employment was used as the blowing up factor. On the other hand, for estimating the totals of those characteristics which are not directly correlated with employment such as, daily hours of work, units levying fines, etc., the ratio of units was used as the blowing-up factor. Estimates of percentages have been arrived at by computing in each case the ratio of the estimates of the totals for the two characteristics involved.

More precisely, the estimates for the total (for all-India) of a particular characteristic not correlated with employment in the industry has been obtained as:

$$X = \frac{N_u - N'_u}{n_u - n'_u} \sum X_{iu} + \frac{N_L - N'_L}{n_L - n'_L} \sum X_{iL} \quad (1)$$

The summation extending over all the sampled units surveyed in the industry.

Where  $X$  = the estimated total of the  $X$  characteristic for the industry.

$N_u$  and  $N_L$  = the number of units in the original population as featuring in the 1960 list, which was used as frame, in the upper and lower size-groups respectively of the industry.

$N'_u$  and  $N'_L$  = the number of units which featured in the 1960 list but were not featuring in the list relating to the period more or less coinciding with the period of the Survey in the upper and lower size-groups respectively of the industry.

$n_u$  and  $n_L$  = the total number of units in the sample (from 1960 list) in the upper and lower size groups respectively of the industry.

$n'_u$  and  $n'_L$  = the number of sampled units, which were found at the time of the Survey to be closed or to have changed the line of production and hence left out in the upper and lower size groups respectively of the industry.

$X_{iu}$  and  $X_{iL}$  = the total of the characteristic  $x$  in the  $i$ -th sample unit of the upper and lower size groups respectively of the industry.

In the industry the estimate for the characteristic  $Y$  correlated with employment is given by

$$Y = \frac{E_{N_u} - N'_u}{E_{N_u} - n'_u} \sum Y_{iu} + \frac{E_{N_L} - N'_L}{E_{N_L} - n'_L} \sum Y_{iL} \quad (2)$$

The summation extending over all the sampled units surveyed in the industry.

Where  $\bar{Y}$  = the estimated total of the characteristic  $Y$  for the industry.

$E_{N_u - N'_u}$  and

$E_{N_l - N'_l}$  = the total employment in 1960 in the  $N_u - N'_u$  and  $N_l - N'_l$  units respectively of the industry.

$E_{n_u - n'_u}$  and

$E_{n_l - n'_l}$  = the total employment in 1960 in  $n_u - n'_u$  and  $n_l - n'_l$  sampled units respectively of the industry.

$Y_{iu}$  and  $Y_{il}$  = the total of the characteristic  $Y$  in the  $i$ -th sampled unit of the upper and lower size groups respectively of the industry.







